

CONTACT GROUP

ON PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was created on January 14, 2009 pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1851. This voluntary ad hoc international forum brings together those stakeholders affected by Somali piracy: countries from the region, Western Europe, Middle East, Asia and the Americas, Industry, seafarer's organisations and NGOs. The Contact Group coordinates political, military and non-governmental efforts to tackle piracy off the coast of Somalia, ensure that pirates are brought to justice and support regional states to develop sustainable maritime security capabilities.

Message from the Chair

Dear friends and members of the CGPCS Community,

The October edition of our newsletter covers events which have occurred since the 20th Plenary of the CGPCS. H.E. Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles, was invited as a High Level Panelist on Maritime Security at the Ocean Conference, Malta. He gave prominence to the CGPCS message that piracy is very much active and there is a need for international naval forces to maintain their active presence whilst efforts should continue earnestly to develop regional maritime security capacity. I reiterated this point at the SAGAR Discourse 1.0 in Goa, India, where I was invited by the Forum for Integrated National Security. Further, I put emphasis on the need for the shipping community to implement best management practices, BMP4.

My meeting with the Secretary General of the African Ship Owners Association, Ms Funmi Folorunso, was another opportunity to reiterate the latter point.

In this issue we also include reports from EUNAVFOR, EUCAP SOMALIA, OBP and CRIMARIO.

But, by far the most devastating event was the heinous and barbarous crime that shook Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, on 14th October. On behalf of the CGPCS, I had the following message for the Government and People of Somalia, which was addressed to the Foreign Minister, **H.E. Yusuf Garaad Omar**:

"Excellency,...permit me on behalf of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, CGPCS, to express our profound sadness to you and to the good people of Somalia. Remembering our visit this past July to Mogadishu, this barbaric act by a desperate and murderous group strikes us to the heart and fills us with sorrow.

“We are conscious of your sacrifices and of your strong resolve. We know that nothing can stop the Federal Government of Somalia from achieving its objectives to bring safety and security, and peace and a new development paradigm to the people of Somalia.

“For those who lost loved ones we offer our prayers and sympathies. For those who are injured and struggling for life, we wish them a quick recovery. We stand behind you. Our prayers and thoughts are with you and the people of Somalia - the righteous cause will prevail.”

Thank you.



Footnote: The CGPCS Secretariat informs that it is preparing to handover duties to the Indian Ocean Commission. This will be done in early December 2017. As a result a final Newsletter under the CGPCS Chairmanship of the Seychelles, will be in December 2017 where an outgoing message from Ambassador Barry Faure, Chair of the CGPCS for 2017, will feature; as well an incoming message from the IOC.

Message to the Honorable Foreign Minister –

CGPCS Chairman extends condolences to Government of Federal Republic of Somalia.

Following the horrendous attack in Mogadishu which occurred on 14th October 2017, and resulted in many innocent civilians either being killed or injured came as a shock and was met with sadness. However in his message of sympathy and support which was sent to the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Hon. Yusuf-Garaad Omar, Ambassador Barry Faure, Chairman of the CGPCS said in part, “We are conscious of your sacrifices and of your strong resolve. We know that nothing can stop the Federal Government of Somalia from achieving its objectives to bring safety and security, and peace and a new development paradigm to the people of Somalia.

For those who lost loved ones we offer our prayers and sympathies. For those who are injured and struggling for life, we wish them a quick recovery.

We stand behind you.”

Is piracy on a continued decline?

Despite the fact that attacks on merchant vessels appear to have decreased, the possibility of attacks and the successful pirating of sailing vessels remains likely due to their vulnerability and the reduction of revenue sources from pirated merchant vessels.



In the past fortnight in **Puntland**, the Bossaso Port Police (BPP) have been carrying out policing and patrol tasks within Bossaso Port and the surrounding area with their two newly acquired patrol boats. The increased operational capability delivered through these new boats was exemplified when on 22 September, after cueing about a suspicious boat headed to the Bari region of Puntland, the BPP conducted a joint operation with Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMFP) to interdict a large shipment of illegal weapons smuggled from Yemen which included PKM machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, AK-47 assault rifles and other heavy weapons. The boat was also seized as were two vehicles that were used for the transportation of the weapons. The PMPF and BPP's display of cooperation and interoperability during this complex interdiction operation is commendable.



SEYCHELLES PRESIDENT DANNY FAURE DELIVERS NEW COMMITMENTS TO SAFEGUARDING OUR OCEANS

Speaking at the High Level panel discussion on Maritime Security on the opening day of the leadership “Our Oceans Conference” in Malta on 9th October, President Danny Faure delivered a poignant message to world leaders, entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, scientists and researchers on the importance of having resilient blue economies and to finding innovative and visionary solutions on how to conserve and sustainably use our Ocean, for the present and future generations.



Since 2014, Our Ocean conferences, have invited world leaders to look forward and respond by delivering high-level commitments and transforming the challenges into opportunities for cooperation, innovation and entrepreneurship.

President Faure emphasised that; “Maritime security is an extremely important component of the sustainable development of the ocean economy. One of the expected results of the blue economy strategy is greater protection for Seychelles’ ocean space and resources through better coordination across different sectors, application of protective measures and greater use of surveillance and enforcement tools. This is certainly a formidable challenge for a SIDS like Seychelles. But, because of our limited and competing resources, it is particularly important that we have a well-thought out maritime security strategy, and this is thus our commitment and we welcome any cooperation that may be extended to us in this regard.”

The 2017 edition “An Ocean for Life” aims to drive forward new collaborations in the following ocean areas– marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries, marine pollution, climate-change, and this year’s 2 extra themes, maritime security and sustainable blue economy. President Faure was invited to share the Seychelles experience on these themes and also provide an update on the previously registered commitments made in 2016. The commitments were on the issuance of the first Blue Bonds in support of sustainable fisheries, and the debt swap to develop a marine spatial plan of our EEZ and designate 30% as marine protected areas.

The conference welcomed participants from around the globe to reaffirm many of the voluntary commitments made at recent UN conference in support to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 held in June this year.

Commander CTF 151 visits Seychelles and Meets with CGPCS Chair

Rear Admiral Emre Sezenler, Commander of Task Force 151 (CTF 151) and his delegation met with Ambassador Barry Faure, in his capacity as Chair of the CGPCS, during his last visit in Seychelles on 11th September 2017.

The visit provided an opportunity for Admiral Sezenier to update Ambassador Faure on latest developments as regards maritime security in the region. Following a request which was made to the Ministry of Home Affairs, CTF151 Commander and his delegation as well met with Somali nationals who had been convicted of piracy and who are currently serving out their sentences in Seychelles.



Rear Admiral Emre Sezenler, CTF 151 and Ambassador Barry Faure, CGPCS Chairman.

CRIMARIO updates on IORIS in Seychelles

CRIMARIO participated in the CGPCS plenary session in Mauritius (5-7 July); Admiral Bosselut and David Nattrass presented the information sharing tools at the working group 2 session (regional capacity building).

Following CGPCS session, Admiral Bosselut and David Nattrass travelled to Seychelles from 9 to 12 July to present an update of the work carried out for the IORIS maritime information sharing platform. This visit allowed a very productive meeting with the main representatives of the maritime administrations concerned by the project. Representatives of EU CRIMARIO were also received by Ambassador Barry Faure at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Seychelles, who kindly devoted the necessary time to be presented in detail the design of the IORIS platform.

In parallel to the information sharing component, CRIMARIO continues to develop its training programme regarding maritime data processing (MDP). The three last sessions of this programme, on data analysis, were conducted in Antananarivo in August, September and October to the benefit of a group of thirty participants of Comoros and Madagascar. As a result, those countries have highly skilled specialists: analysts who transform data prepared by the visualisation specialists in added-value information useful for decision making. In addition, a group of trainers was trained to continue on the field the capacity building exercise. In the forthcoming months, this training programme will be deployed in the other partner countries. – **Source CRIMARIO**

African Ship Owners Association seeks to promote African shipping industry in a meeting with CGPCS Chairman, Ambassador Barry Faure.

“Seychelles can take a lead role”.

At a meeting held on Friday 29th, September 2017, at the Department of Foreign Affairs, between the Chairman of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, CGPCS, Ambassador Barry Faure, Secretary of State in the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Secretary General of the African Ship Owners Association, Ms. Funmi Folorunso, provided an opportunity to discuss key initiatives which are at this time being promoted by the Association.



In welcoming the Secretary General to Seychelles, Ambassador Faure remarked how in particular the concerted efforts of the international community has to date successfully managed the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, and by that providing a secure environment for trade on the high seas to continue unmolested. “We of course are not resting on our laurels and take every opportunity to continually remind all that vigilance must remain as regards possible acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia,” said Ambassador Barry Faure. “We note that in early April and May, there were approximately seventeen incidents, with several ships again attacked, but since that time to date, there has been no successful attacks. Thanks in part to the rough seas during this monsoon period, the sea state will once again calm down sometime in mid-October, providing an opportunity for possible acts of desperation by pirate gangs itching to strike,” he added.

At the 20th Plenary of the CGPCS held in Mauritius earlier in July 2017, the community agreed that vigilance would be maintained as the work continued to see an end to piracy within the Western Indian Ocean.

The Secretary General, who is in Seychelles to attend the 8th Womesa Conference, celebrating, “Women in Africa’s Maritime Industry,” welcomed the opportunity to meet with Ambassador Barry Faure, complimenting Seychelles for the role it has played to date in the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean. Ms. Folorunso then briefed the CGPCS Chairman on her Association’s objectives to better position African entrepreneurs within the maritime sector, promoting greater access to trade to Africa by African shipping, and encouraging the establishment of shipping associations so as to link up and promote greater economic empowerment for the African shipping industry.

While in Seychelles, the Secretary General expressed her keen interest to engage more with Seychelles and its maritime industry, mentioning SEYPEC as a success story, and an enterprise which could be leading further in the region. Commenting on the Blue Economy, Ms. Folorunso said that Seychelles could take a lead role by leveraging what is had achieved to date and speaking to the AU so that strategies brought forward by AU member states could be better aligned.

Ambassador Faure congratulated the African Ship Owners Association for its stance in promoting African business within the maritime sector. He added that in these times as peace and security is being maintained on the high seas, this year's IMO World Maritime theme "Connecting Ships, Ports and People" was especially poignant. The Chairman thanked the Secretary General for the initiatives promoted and brought forward which he said was in line with this year's theme of the CGPCS "Leaving a lasting legacy," and looked forward to working together with the Association.

As previously reported, the chairmanship of the CGPCS will from 1st January 2018 be handed over to the Indian Ocean Commission in Mauritius.

Sir James Mancham CENTRE FOR PEACE STUDIES & DIPLOMACY at the University of Seychelles launched!



(L-R – Professor Hardy, Vice Chancellor of University of Seychelles, Mrs. Catherine Mancham, wife of former President Mancham, Mr. Alexander Mancham, President of the Centre, and Seychelles General Consul to Bulgaria, Mr. Maxim Behar, who is as well chairman of the Peace Center, during the official launch of the centre at the Eden Bleu Hotel, Eden Island, Mahé Seychelles. Missing in the photo is Dr. Erna Athanasius, Consultant Paediatrician and Seychelles Ambassador for Women & Children, who also spoke at the event.)

As referred to in the July 2017 Special Edition, the CGPCS Secretariat is pleased to announce that the official launch of the Sir James Mancham's International Centre for Peace Studies and Diplomacy under the University of Seychelles which the Secretariat supported took place on 11th August 2017.

Footnote: Sir James Mancham was the founding President of the Republic of Seychelles. Recognised as a statesman and a man of peace, President Mancham was a member of the African Council of Elders for East Africa. He sadly passed on 8th January 2017.

IGAD STANDS WITH SOMALIA IN THE FACE OF HORRIFYING ATTACKS

15th October 2017, Djibouti: The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is horrified by the unspeakable twin terror attacks of yesterday 14th October 2017 in Mogadishu that claimed so many innocent lives.

In a condolence letter that the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Amb (Eng.) Mahboub Maalim sent today to the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, H.E. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, he expressed deep sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims as well as to the people of Somalia, while wishing speedy recovery to the injured.

“I also wish to assure the Government and people of Somalia of IGAD’s full solidarity in these difficult circumstances and reiterate our readiness to support Somalia to combat terrorism through the existing regional and continental mechanisms,” the message continued.

Amb Maalim appealed to “the international community to renew its commitment to defeat terrorist groups, whose only agenda is to cause havoc, destruction and death, by providing the necessary support to the Somalia National Army (SNA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).”

The Executive Secretary concluded his condolence message by highlighting the necessity for “all political leaders to cast aside their differences and to stand united” and by urging them “to adhere to the respect for the institutions, constitution, laws, and customs” of the country. **Source – IGAD**

News from EUCAP SOMALIA - IT equipment and training materials donated



This month in a ceremony at the General Kahiye Police Academy in Mogadishu, EUCAP Somalia donated a range of assets, including IT equipment and training materials, to the Somali Police Force. The donated equipment forms part of EUCAP Somalia’s ongoing support to help strengthen the Somali police capability to prevent and counter maritime crime. The Police Headquarters, the Maritime Police Unit, Police Academy, and Criminal Investigation Department will all benefit from the donation. Following the handover ceremony, the EUCAP Somalia Head of Mission met with the Somali Police Force Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner to discuss the Mission’s support to the Somali Police Force.

Deputy Police Commissioner General Bashir said: “The Somali Police Force welcomes the generous support from the EU in general and EUCAP Somalia in particular. Maritime security is among the many challenges Somalia faces. Illicit trade, human smuggling and environmental crimes often have a link to our shores and waters. We appreciate the support to counter these threats”.

EUCAP Somalia Head of Mission Maria-Cristina Stepanescu commented: “I am impressed by the dedication and efforts of the Somali Police Force to create a lasting secure and stable environment for Somalia. EUCAP Somalia remains committed to continue to support these efforts. A more stable and secure maritime domain also supports Somalia in making sustainable use of its marine resources for the benefit of the Somali people”.

Background

EUCAP Somalia is a civilian EU mission, under the auspices of the Common Security and Defence Policy, which assists Somalia in strengthening its capacity to ensure maritime security. – **Source EUCAP Somalia**

EUNAVFOR provides medical supplies following casualties

After the recent bombings in Mogadishu, Somalia, EU Naval Force has provided medical supplies to the UN to support Somali casualties.

The Spanish SH60B helicopter, from ESPS RAYO, was loaded with high priority medical stores and equipment, as requested by the UN, in order to support the immediate needs in Mogadishu. The stores were received by Commander Russ Nash Royal Navy and his EU team of helpers, which were then moved as quickly as possible to the UN Medical Teams and put to immediate use.



RAYO was the nearest EU NAVFOR vessel and was diverted to bring in immediate help. Even though she is a military vessel unable to support large amounts of casualties, it was decided that a short-term, high impact event would help address the immediate needs.



In addition to EU NAVFOR efforts, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) has immediately started relief efforts and has released initial emergency funding. This will support humanitarian partners to quickly provide medical and surgical supplies, referral services through ambulance services, the Deployment of an Emergency Rapid Response Team, as well as the provision of psychological support & counselling services to relatives and survivors of the incident, and the training of government health care staff.

The EU is a leading humanitarian donor to Somalia, having provided €119 million in emergency assistance in 2017.

Recently in Muscat, EU Naval Force's Italian warship ITS Fasan conducted combined exercises with the Royal Navy of Oman vessel Al Shinas.

During the meeting, the crews of both ships practiced boarding operations and conducted a casualty winching exercise using Fasan's SH-90 helicopter. With a capacity to take up to 20 troops, or 12 stretchers, the SH-90 is an ideal helicopter for maritime operations. In addition to this the two warships took part in exercises known as a PASSEX which requires the warships to manoeuvre around each other in a safe manner.

Training such as this enables aviation and naval teams from different nations to work together and strengthen cooperation at sea, helping to reduce the threat posed by piracy off the coast of Somalia. – **Source EUNAVFOR News**

VISIT OF THE UN ASSISTANT SECRETAR-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TAYÉ-BROOK ZERIHOUN TO IGAD PEACE AND SECURITY DIVISION

The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, met with The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Peace and Security Division Director Amb. Tewolde Gebremeskel and the IGAD Executive Secretary's Peace and Security advisor, Col. Gebregziabher Alemseged on 12 October 2017, to discuss the prevailing Peace and Security issues in the IGAD region and the cooperation framework between the two organizations.



The UN Assistant Secretary-General for political Affairs has raised with the Peace and Security Director of IGAD, important peace and Security issues concerning the situation in South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and also issues pertaining to Eritrea and the gulf areas. He has also raised his concerns on the coordination between UN, AU and IGAD.

Mr. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun re-assured Ambassador Tewolde that UN supports the actions of IGAD pertaining to the South Sudan Revitalization process. He stressed that IGAD should make sure of the inclusivity of the process. The two had agreed on the need to strengthen the relationship between UN and IGAD and to revise and refocus the framework for cooperation between the two organizations that was signed two years back.

Ambassador Tewolde on his part had stated that IGAD is trying its level best to make sure there will be wider and inclusive consultations on the upcoming High Level Revitalization Forum for South Sudan. He also stated that IGAD closely follows up on all Peace and Security issues in the region and close cooperation among UN, AU and IGAD is very important to tackle the problems of the region effectively.

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SECURITY & GROWTH FOR ALL IN THE REGION (SAGAR) DISCOURSE 1.0

Ambassador Barry Faure, CGPCS Chair, was invited as Speaker to the 1st Edition of the SAGAR Discourse by the Forum for Integrated National Security (FINS) of India. This First Annual International Maritime Conference took place at the Leela Goa in India on 12-14 October 2017. FINS is a think-tank which provides research to the Indian Government on national security issues.



The theme for this Discourse was on Ocean Partnership and the CGPCS Chair focused his intervention on Marine Environment and Climate Change, more specifically on “Island Governance and SIDS”.

The attendance of the Chair of the CGPCS was an opportunity to remind the shipping industry and the ocean users that piracy is very much active and that we all need to remain vigilant. There were various ship owners represented at this conference.



Some Speakers with Team Members of FINS



CGPCS Chair receiving a momentum from Lt. Gen. (Dr.) DB Shekatkar, President of FINS

Seychelles President expresses gratitude to UNODC for leadership in region.

Maritime Crime Programme a welcomed initiative.



UNODC Head, Mr. Yuri Fedotov meets with Seychelles President Danny Faure at

‘Our Ocean’ Conference in Malta.

The UNODC has been very active in developing regional capacity in Somalia and the larger region. The President of Seychelles took the opportunity of his presence at the Ocean Conference, Malta, 5-6 October 2017 to meet formally with the Executive Director of the UNODC, Yuri Fedotov.

The President expressed his gratefulness and appreciation to the UNODC for the outstanding work that they have undertaken in the fight against piracy. The Seychelles Head of State also sought assistance for Seychelles’ professed commitment to adopt a comprehensive maritime security strategy as well as in the fight against drugs, the latter being a major concern for the regional states.

Member states of the Indian Ocean Commission have committed to approaches that will see measures being used to enhance maritime domain awareness as members combat drug trafficking, smuggling, transnational crime on the high seas, and acts of piracy.



OCEANS BEYOND PIRACY

a project of the One Earth Future Foundation

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Oceans Beyond Piracy updates

1. OBP report work, under the Hostage Support Programme, to free the remaining 8 Iranian hostages held by Somali Pirates since March 2015.
2. RCBWG
 - a. continues to support regional states in developing and coordinating Maritime Capacity Building. The IOC and Kenya Chair this useful coordination mechanism under the CGPCS. A number of states have still not identified and reported to the secretariat (OBP) their key priorities and areas they have identified for cooperation.
 - b. In support of Identifying priorities One Earth Foundation produced a Maritime Security Index (see link below) which measures threats and the ability of states to counter them. This will be an invaluable tool in developing and supporting capacity in regional states.
<http://stableseas.org/stable-seas-executive-brief.jpg>
3. OBP in conjunction with UNODC and EUCAP Somalia have supplied and installed equipment under the Maritime Communications Initiative to Berbera and it is underway in Bosasso. Funding is not currently available to continue this project to Mogadishu, Kismayo, Merka, Barrowe and the developing Galmudug CG in Hobyo.
4. Later this month (24-26 Oct) Shuraako and Secure Fisheries will host a Somali wide fisheries conference in Garowe, Puntland to support (and finance) fisheries cooperatives and coastal communities' livelihood projects. This amongst other similar activities by FAO and IGAD under MASE are aimed at offering an alternative to Piracy and a key part of the Blue Economy for Somalia.

STABLE SEAS

MARITIME SECURITY INDEX

The inaugural Stable Seas Maritime Security Index is a first-of-its-kind effort to measure and map a range of threats to maritime governance and the capacity of nations to counter these threats. By bringing diverse challenges like piracy, smuggling, and capacity-building into one comprehensive analysis, we can better understand how these issues intersect to affect maritime security. Practitioners and policy makers can use this tool to identify areas for development and expanded cooperation.



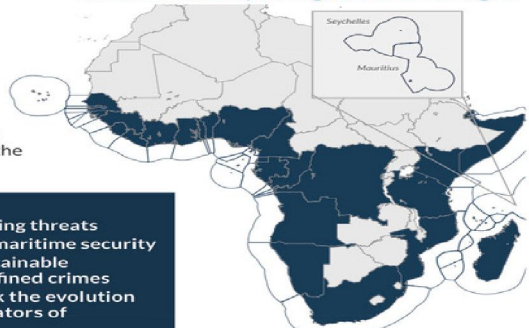
Each state in sub-Saharan Africa has its own unique combination of maritime security strengths and challenges.

An African Vision for Maritime Security

The African Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS 2050) illuminates the maritime vision shared by African nations: “developing a sustainable thriving blue economy in a secure and environmentally sustainable manner,” connecting the challenges and opportunities of the African maritime space. Regional maritime security strategies such as the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, the Lomé Charter, and the amended Djibouti Code of Conduct unanimously deliver the same message: all maritime issues are linked.

STABLE SEAS GOALS

- Assess current levels of maritime crime and monitor emerging threats
- Prioritize efforts to address the most critical challenges in maritime security
- Guide capacity-building efforts towards long-term and sustainable investments and away from quick solutions to narrowly-defined crimes
- Monitor progress towards greater maritime security, track the evolution of related issues, and measure and map quantitative indicators of maritime security



The Stable Seas Maritime Security Index covers 30 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.



www.lessonsfrompiracy.net