

UAE 4th Counter Piracy Conference
Securing State Recovery:
Sustaining Momentum at Sea, Confronting Instability on Land
29-30 October 2014

Conference Statement

For the fourth consecutive year, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DP World are delighted to conclude the highly successful UAE Counter-Piracy Conference. Building on the accomplishments of the last three UAE Counter-Piracy Conferences, this meeting of public and private sector stakeholders has surpassed expectations in setting up a framework at a national, regional and international level to foster coordinated efforts to effectively combat maritime piracy at sea and regional threats on land. Memorable outcomes were achieved with all discussions steered towards constructive solutions that will have a profound effect on Africa and the world's collective long-term future.

Held under the theme, "Securing State Recovery: Sustaining Momentum at Sea, Confronting Instability Land", the 2014 conference addressed the challenges and current concerns regarding maritime piracy. The UAE has portrayed its continued commitment and its ongoing efforts in relentlessly tackling the plague of piracy in the Horn of Africa and its recent shift to the Gulf of Guinea. In hopes of deriving lasting solutions and recommendations, it has been acknowledged that land-based remedies and achieving stability in this stressed region is a prerequisite to achieving long-term security for those plying the world's trade lanes at sea.

In his welcome note, the UAE Foreign Minister reiterated that the international efforts have yielded tangible successes with the decrease of the pirates' attacks during the past two years. He also commended the Somali Government on its progress in bringing peace and prosperity to the people of Somalia and in reestablishing justice and the rule of law in places where it has been absent for too long.

In this regard, the main plenary session that took place on October 29 included discussions that revolved around lessons learned from maritime piracy in the Horn of Africa and recent trends that helped facilitate building a framework for future cooperation. This year, the scope of discussion expanded to include West Africa, a region of growing concern for governments and industry alike. It was acknowledged that, as the threat of piracy evolves to encompass a more

transnational nature, there is also an increase in prospects for cooperation which entails more effective mutual assistance and greater collaboration between countries, agencies, and industry.

The three breakout sessions that took place on the second day, October 30, developed diverse solutions. Breakout session A was successful in demonstrating means for synchronized efforts between governments and regional and international organizations in halting the rise of cross-border crimes across Africa. Various methods of enhancing coordination and intelligence sharing efforts were discussed as critical measures in the fight against crime and maritime piracy.

Breakout session B entailed fruitful analysis and recommendations regarding initiatives and contributions provided by the industry in supporting capacity building efforts and improving livelihoods in Somalia. An examination of these past initiatives enabled the development of new recommendations that could foster long-term stability and security in the region.

The third breakout session, C, enveloped a robust discussion on terrorist groups and illicit criminal networks which provided an understanding of these groups' motives and needs as a major stepping stone in determining future requirements in the security sector. Discussing changes in criminal and terrorist capability and tactics provided an insight on potential ways regional forces can combat threats.

Finally, the special discussion on youth and gender empowerment highlighted the vital importance of empowering and engaging these marginalized groups in society for the enduring growth and prosperity of the region. Tools for youth investment and mechanisms to counter gender-based violence were advocated as key to addressing this issue.

The United Arab Emirates' actions, taken in concert with those of other concerned government and industry stakeholders, are persistent in combating the effects of maritime piracy both on land and at sea. We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring the safety of the world's oceans and the wellbeing of citizens and seafarers alike.

The hosts thank our honoured guests from both governments and industry, and our distinguished panelists, for their contribution in making this conference yet another success.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The fourth UAE Counter-Piracy Conference, held over October 29-30 in Dubai, was attended by more than 600 delegates, including attendees from over 50 government and non-governmental organizations, and senior industry and business executives. The mixture of public and private sector participants from across the region and around the world created an unmatched opportunity for dialogue. In addition to the formal meetings and workshops, the Conference provided delegates with a forum for bilateral meetings and informal discussions that will form the basis for counter-piracy coordination in the years ahead.

The Conference also hosted delegations from the Federal Government of Somalia and from the autonomous regions of Galmudug, Jubaland, Puntland, and Somaliland. The Conference hopes that convening these parties will contribute to Somalia's political and economic development and future security.

During the Conference, statements from foreign ministers and senior government officials highlighted the support of the international community for counter-piracy efforts at sea and on land. Ministerial statements were provided by Bahamas, Bangladesh, Brunei, Comoros, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Yemen, and the GCC Secretary General.

The Conference noted that while incidents of Somali-based piracy have fallen significantly, the economic costs remains high at more than \$3 billion, and the human cost to seafarers and their families is severe. There remain an estimated 37 seafarers still held captive in Somalia. They have been held now for nearly three years. The international community continues to have a vital role fostering debate and solutions to this very serious issue.