

The UAE's second Piracy Conference
Welcome speech by His Highness Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan
UAE's Minister of Foreign Affairs
Dubai, The United Arab Emirates
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His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai,
Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to offer you my heartfelt welcome in the UAE, we have sought with our partners in the DP World for the second time to organize this conference which brings together leaders from the government sector and the maritime industry of international experts, who shall meet together to discuss ways of strengthening the current international response to the issue of the fight against piracy.

I take this opportunity to convey to you the greetings of His Highness Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister of United Arab Emirates, which a change in schedule prevented him from attending this event, but the His Highness would like to express our deep gratitude for accepting the invitation and attending the conference, and I would like to convey the optimism of His Highness and his trust in concrete developments that would result from this conference.

In this regard I have the honor to convey the greetings of the UAE to the Somali leaders present here today, led by Somali President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, It is a pleasure to welcome again our brothers the Somalis here in the United Arab Emirates.

This conference is the second anti-piracy at a crucial time for each of the partners involved in Somalia and the international response to maritime piracy off the Somali coast.

As of now and one year after the first conference was held in the UAE, which was the first high-level event of this kind, this conference brings together both the public and private sectors to combat piracy in the region, we will see the progress that has been achieved on a large scale with respect to access to a comprehensive solution to the issue.

Maintaining this progress is no doubt crucial, and we need especially with regards to this issue to ensure that such a progress commences by showing positive results to the Somali people, in order to achieve our goal of a long-term and sustainable solution to the problem of piracy off the Somali coast.

The UAE is looking forward with its partners in this context to a number of developments that can be achieved during this meeting, which brings us together today, and I refer in this context, two key elements the UAE would like to propose during the meetings to be held, namely:

First, the threat to humanity caused by piracy off the Somali coast, which is tangible clearly by observing the suffering of the captives, and their families, not to mention that this threat has attracted attention over the last year, by rising in intensity, and many of the captives suffer from violence at the hands of pirates, and they are detained for increasing periods and deteriorating conditions.

It was therefore that DP World and its partners in the global maritime industry considered the conditions experienced by the sailors are of top priorities of this conference, and we in the UAE enjoy a long history in maritime navigation and trade, which makes us feel the suffering of the sailors deeply. Hence, governments must find ways to enable themselves to adopt new means to help alleviate the harsh conditions experienced by many of the captives.

Second: It has become clear that efforts must be directed towards a more regional leadership capacity in the context of the international response to combat piracy, and so the truth of the matter is that a regional solution can only be sustainable in the long term in this context.

The UAE has stressed repeatedly the need to provide support to countries in that region, especially Somalia so that those countries are able to demonstrate national effective responses to national maritime piracy which stems from its shores and in this regard the UAE is pleased to provide one million dollars to contribute to the development of the capabilities of the Navy forces and the Somali coast guards

Improving the ability of Somalia to fight piracy in its territorial waters enhances regional ownership and participation desired by the international community and supports other long-term targets as well in Somalia and the region, including the restoration of peace and stability to Somalia, which will certainly contribute to help the country address other major challenges facing it, such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, the activities of illegal trade and hunting , which all lead to the weakening and the threat of development and prosperity of the economy and society in Somalia.

Therefore, we hope that Somalia and its partners are able to reach an agreement over the next two days to support the progress of Somalia in this important area.

This is the second meeting to be held in Dubai which sends a clear message that: regional partners of Somalia will continue to lead the international response to the threat of maritime piracy.

It has become clear, especially after the successes of the London Conference on Somalia, which was held last February, the second conference of Istanbul on Somalia in June that the international community is ready to support countries in the region in the face of this challenge and with the availability of such a shared commitment we can and without doubt look forward to achieving tangible results and real progress by our noble efforts. I assure you that because of the UAE's determination to play an important role in this field, it stems from a sense of responsibility and a sense of the importance of activating the regional role in addressing this challenge in order to achieve stability in the region and support for Somalia's government and people.

To conclude, I would like to extend my greetings to the ports of Dubai World, our partner in this conference, praising their great role and their great initiative and I would like to take this opportunity to convey to you greetings of the United Arab Emirates once again and thank you for your appreciated participation in this important initiative.