

COMMUNIQUE
THIRD HIGH-LEVEL PUBLIC-PRIVATE COUNTER-PIRACY CONFERENCE
“COUNTERING MARITIME PIRACY: CONTINUED EFFORTS FOR REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING”
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
11-12 SEPTEMBER 2013

The participants present at the United Arab Emirates third high-level, public private counter-piracy conference, *“Countering maritime piracy: Continued efforts for regional capacity building”*, consisting of states, international organizations, and representatives of the global maritime industry, agreed to the following points:

1. Piracy in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean continues to pose a grave threat to international commerce, peace and security. While the efforts of the international community and the shipping industry have led to a significant drop in pirate attacks, there are still seafarers held hostage by Somali pirates, and the cost of piracy to the global economy was estimated at around US\$ 6 billion in 2012.¹
2. The recent decline in pirate attacks is both fragile and reversible; governments and industry need to maintain their focus on maritime piracy and warn that any easing of security efforts at sea and capacity building on shore will likely see a resurgence of pirate attacks. The efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia and regional and local authorities – including Galmudug, Puntland, and Somaliland – to disrupt piracy activities and bringing pirates to justice were acknowledged.
3. International efforts to undermine the piracy business model, from naval operations at sea to prosecuting the land-based financiers of piracy, should be expanded. In this context, there is a continuing need for the international community to cooperate on law enforcement, including with INTERPOL, to investigate and prosecute international criminal networks involved in piracy and, in particular, those responsible for illicit financing and facilitation, consistent with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.
4. The importance of information sharing and transnational cooperation on the criminal investigation of piracy, especially through regional centers such as the Regional Anti-Piracy Prosecutions Intelligence Coordination Center (RAPPICC) in the Seychelles and the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre in Sana’a, Yemen, is critical to deterring, disrupting and prosecuting those responsible for and profiting from piracy. Our unswerving law enforcement priorities must remain the prosecution of organisers and financiers, and the release of those hostages still being held in captivity. The RAPPICC initiative represents a significant building block in creating a sound regional criminal justice framework in which a stabilized Somalia can thrive.
5. Both the public and private sector participants draw the international community’s attention to the on-going grave humanitarian situation of seafarers still held in captivity in Somalia and the plight of their families and call on the international community, with the help of the Federal Government of Somalia and regional authorities, to do everything in their power to release these captives and return them to their families.
6. The progress made in implementing common standards for private security personnel on board merchant vessels is to be commended. The industry continues to focus on implementing Best Management Practices on board to protect their crew, their assets and their customers’ cargo. These measures should complement the work of flag state signatories to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention, and the annexed International Ship and Port Facilities Security Code, to ensure certain ships flying their flag have ship security plans and implement ship security measures appropriate to the current security risk context.

¹ Figure from the report “Economic Cost of Somali Piracy 2012” by Oceans Beyond Piracy

7. In light of the progress made in combating piracy off the coast of Somalia and to alleviate the burden of counter-piracy measures on the Somali people, neighboring coastal communities and the wider region, participants called on the ad-hoc meeting to be held shortly to consider scaling down on a transparent and objective basis the High Risk Area by removing the Red Sea from its scope and reverting to 65° East Longitude in the Arabian Sea.
8. Enhancing regional capacity is a crucial way to ensure a long-term and sustainable response to piracy, by enabling countries in the region to control their own shores and patrol their own waters. There is a need for strategic, focused, and multi-disciplinary approaches that include security operations, investments in economic and social development, humanitarian assistance, and capacity building for local security forces and legal systems. Improving the maritime security capacity of Somalia and its neighbors will not only contribute to further deterring and preventing pirate attacks, it will also help the region in facing other challenges, such as illegal fishing and human trafficking.
9. The Dubai conference was a venue for governments and regional experts to come together to discuss how to better match the capacity building needs of the region with offers of assistance from donor countries. In this respect, the conference noted the outcomes of the Capacity Building Coordination Group meeting that was held on 10 September 2013 in Dubai. It also welcomed the IMO's initiative to expand the Djibouti Code of Conduct to address wider regional maritime security and safety issues in the future.
10. The main efforts for capacity building are to take place in Somalia, on land and on the coast. The Federal Government of Somalia, with the help of the African Union and other international partners, has made welcome progress towards the goal of building a prosperous and secure nation. Harmonious relations between the Federal Government of Somalia and regional entities, including the newly established Interim Jubba Administration, were encouraged.
11. The maritime and related industries support the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to establish robust state governance, working institutions and an effective legal and security framework on which to build a sustainable economy, and look forward to pursuing opportunities to invest in Somali for the long term, thereby helping address the root causes of piracy.
12. The Somalia Maritime Resource and Security Strategy, a comprehensive and inclusive strategic framework to assist Somalia in developing a peaceful and productive maritime domain, will serve as a foundation for international partners to begin implementation of capacity building projects coordinated with the strategy as soon as possible. The Somali-led efforts to agree on this strategy are commended.
13. Major progress has been made within Somalia on security, justice and public financial management since the Somalia Conference in London in May 2013. Nearly US\$ 350 million of new financial support was pledged at that Conference. The EU-Somalia Conference in Brussels on 16 September 2013 is an important opportunity to sustain the positive momentum in Somalia, and to ensure that the country stays on the path to stability, peace and prosperity. The Conference will bring together the international community and Somalia to endorse a New Deal Compact, pledge support to enable its implementation and, above all, set out a way forward for the political process and help to deliver tangible results for Somalis across the country. Timely disbursements of financial pledges will ensure much needed assistance for the Federal Government of Somalia's plans.