



United Arab Emirates

FOCUS ON HUMAN COST OF MARITIME PIRACY AND NEED FOR A REGIONAL SOLUTION AS UAE HOSTS 2ND COUNTER-PIRACY SUMMIT

HH Sheikh Abdullah calls for inclusive, long term, sustainable solutions to eradicate maritime piracy, in a speech delivered by HE Dr Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. HE Sultan Bin Sulayem highlights the role of Public Private Partnerships

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, June 26, 2012:- The human and economic cost of maritime piracy and exploring ways to enhance the effectiveness of a regional response are the focus of the 2nd high-level, public-private UAE Counter-Piracy Conference, co-convened by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and global marine terminal operator DP World, that begins tomorrow (June 26).

His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, will host guests at the beginning of this two day high-level conference, being attended by more than 400 delegates including Foreign Ministers, the United Nations' International Maritime Organisation, industry leaders, welfare organisations and academic experts. The Conference Keynote Address will be given by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

Prominent speakers at the event from the government sector include HE Reem Al Hashemy, Minister of State, UAE, HE Hussein Arab Isse, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, HE Abdullahi Haji Hassan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, HE Prof Sam Ogeri, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kenya, and HE Koji Sekimizu, Secretary General, International Maritime Organisation.

Included among those from the global maritime industry addressing the conference are HE Jamal Majid Bin Thaniah, Vice Chairman, DP World, Ali Obaid Al Yabhouni, President, UAE Ship Owners Association and CEO, ADNATCO-NGSCO, Farid Salem, Executive Officer and Member of the Board, CMA CGM, Commodore (Ret) Ranjit Rai, President, Indian Maritime Foundation, and Ms Nareman Jawaid, daughter of Captain Jawaid of the MV Albedo, who, with his crew, was captured by pirates in November 2010 and who is still in captivity.

Held under the theme of “A Regional Response to Maritime Piracy: Enhancing Public Private Partnerships and Strengthening Global Engagement”, the event provides a strategic platform for key international and regional stakeholders to come together to combat maritime piracy through public-private partnership initiatives, which were the highlight of the inaugural UAE Counter-Piracy Conference in April 2011.

The aim is to continue to build awareness of the prevailing threat from maritime piracy, promote further industry-government cooperation, including in the crucial area of extending more support to seafarers and their families who become victims of piracy, and support capacity development among regional states, especially Somalia, to present viable national responses to the threat of piracy off their coasts.

The conference is another landmark in a series of major high-level initiatives on the issue of piracy and support to Somalia, this year. In this respect, the Conference will also discuss ways to build on the work and achievements of the London Conference on Somalia held in February, which pledged to boost support for measures to fight piracy and pledged more humanitarian aid, and the follow up Istanbul II Conference held earlier this month that highlighted support for Somali leaders' search for a political solution within the country.

HH Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, UAE said:

“The threat posed by maritime piracy to global trade, and to the region’s security and economic well-being, continues to be grave. Much progress has been made since the last time leaders from government, the global maritime industry, and experts and policymakers joined together in Dubai, in April 2011. However, the persistence of pirate activity off the coast of Somalia reaffirms the UAE’s belief that more work towards a comprehensive international counter piracy response is required. We are confident that this important meeting will contribute further to the realisation of this long-term and sustainable solution to this issue of major global concern.”

HE Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chairman, DP World, said:

“This important dialogue involving governments and industry is an important vehicle to strengthen public-private partnership in our common fight against maritime piracy. The pirates not only endanger the lives of hundreds of seafarers and disrupt vital economic activities, but also undermine Somalia’s stability and prosperity. DP World is privileged to partner with the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs in convening this high level summit and supporting the search for an enduring solution to the problem.”

The conference is expected to conclude with a declaration outlining areas of cooperation between the private and public sectors, with the aim of further advancing cooperation in various counter piracy initiatives both on land and at sea. On the sidelines of the conference, there will also be two special discussion sessions: one held under the title, “Reconnecting Somalia to the Region’s Maritime Trade”, which will stress the need for the re-engagement of Somalia's coastal community by the global maritime industry, and a second, "Piracy: The Human Cost", which will focus on a documentary specially commissioned by DP World to illustrate the devastating impact of piracy on the lives of seafarers, which will premiere in the opening session of the conference.

According to the EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), which provides escorts to merchant vessels sailing through the piracy-infested waterways, there are more than 200 seafarers currently held hostage by Somali pirates. There have been around 30 incidents involving pirates so far this year, compared with 176 during 2011. While the pirates' success rate has been halved from 28% in 2009 to 14% last year, the level of violence used on seafarers has escalated.

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