

# Regional Programme for the Promotion of Maritime Security in the Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean( ESA-IO)

## #MASE\_Programme

*A Strong Partnership Towards a Safe and Secure Maritime Domain*

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### Press release

### MASE Programme, a regional response to maritime insecurity

**Mauritius, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017** – “The recent events [with three acts of piracy off the Somali coasts after five years of calm], reminded us that maritime insecurity remains a major challenge in the Western Indian Ocean. That is why we must not slacken our efforts”. On the occasion of the opening of the fifth Steering Committee of the Regional Programme for the Promotion of Maritime Security (MASE), on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2017 in Bagatelle (Mauritius), Indian Ocean Commission’s (IOC) General-Secretary, Hamada Madi, enjoined the regional organizations and the countries of the Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean, as well as the international community to “remain mobilised in our region that is strategic for world trade”.

Indeed, “our region is crisscrossed by many maritime highways. For our countries, maritime trade, fisheries and seaside tourism are essential for our economies. The added value of the EU-financed MASE Programme lies in the fact that it is covering all aspects of maritime security and safety”, said the IOC General-Secretary. In this respect, he welcomes the operationalization of the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre in Madagascar and the Regional Maritime Operational Coordination Centre in Seychelles, two useful tools for securing maritime zones.

“We have a range of myriad issues taking place off the coast of Somalia, that is not only piracy but illegal fishing, arms and human trafficking which continue to challenge the region. I do hope together we shall overcome”, declared Ambassador Tewolde Gebremeskel, Director of IGAD Peace and Security Division.

IGAD thus committed to redouble its efforts to working with the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the IOC within the MASE Programme in order to achieve practical results in the realm of security and governance in the maritime domain as well as in social and economic domains such as livelihoods for coastal communities that are the causal factor of maritime criminality.

Confirming that the root causes of piracy is at land, the EU Ambassador Marjaana Sall recalled that the European Union was the largest donor in Somalia, with over EUR 1.2 billion spent on development and capacity building. She also underlined EU overall contribution to maritime security in the region, in particular with the MASE Programme.

The fifth Steering Committee made it possible to take stock of the progresses of the MASE Programme activities, as well to start the process regarding the next Programmes on maritime security and safety in ports to be funded by the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund.



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The members of the MASE Programme's Steering Committee noted the IGAD's commitment to engage with the new Somalia Federal Government at the highest level, and its will to continue engaging with the Federal Maritime Security Coordination Committees and the Regional States, in order to realize optimum Result 1 outcomes.

The Steering Committee also noted with interest the offer by the Republic of Mauritius to host a Center of Excellence for prison staff training. ESA-IO Chiefs of Prisons will visit the Prisons Training School in the course of their 2nd Meeting to be held in Mauritius under the coordination of EAC in late April 2017.

Furthermore, it has been recommended that COMESA and EAC should benefit from the possible synergies in the implementation of their respective activities in the MASE Programme supporting Law Enforcement Agencies, notably the financial regulation institutions and legal and judiciary bodies.

Finally, the members of the Steering Committee support the development of a good collaboration between MASE, through the IOC's Anti-Piracy Unit, and Crimario, the EU-funded Critical Maritime Routes in the Indian Ocean Programme, that should continue as part of the operationalization of the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre and the Regional Maritime Operational Coordination Centre.

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#### Note to the editors

The MASE Programme aims at promoting maritime security and safety in the Western Indian Ocean. Coordinated by IGAD, it comprises five result areas implemented by ESA-IO regional organizations:

- Result 1 – IGAD: Alternative livelihoods through vocational development initiatives and advocacy against piracy are supported; maritime coordination mechanisms are reinforced in Somalia;
- Result 2 – EAC: National & regional legal, legislative and infrastructural capabilities for arrest, transfer, detention and prosecution of pirates are developed and strengthened;
- Result 3 – COMESA: Regional capacity to disrupt the financial networks of pirate leaders and their financier while also addressing the structural vulnerability factors and minimize the economic impact of piracy is strengthened;
- Result 4 – IOC: National and regional capacity for maritime tasks and support functions are enhanced;
- Result 5 – IOC: A regional mechanism for coordination and exchange of information is developed



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The regional organizations (IGAD, IOC, EAC and COMESA), implementing this Programme financed by the EU in the amount of 37.5 million EUR for the 2013-2020 period, are closely collaborating with numerous key players for security and development, including EU missions (EUNAVFOR Atalanta and EUCAPNESTOR), UN Agencies (UNODC, FAO), Interpol...

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For further information on the **MASE Programme**, read and download [the leaflet here](#)

[Read the IOC's annual report 2016](#)



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