

Opening session – CGPCS Friends of the Chair Meeting

Speech by Hon. Nando Bodha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius – Chair of the Contact Group on Piracy of the Coast of Somalia

28th May 2019 – Copenhagen (Denmark)

State Secretary for Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark

Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Copenhagen,

Director General and CEO of the Danish Shipping,

Dear Members of the CGPCS,

All protocol observed,

- It is my very first meeting of the CGPCS Friends of the Chair. It is indeed a real honour to be with you this morning.
- As we are all aware the Indian Ocean has become a major geopolitical and strategic region with key issues regarding security, international trafficking, trade, peace and stability.
- At our meeting, we will thus have the opportunity to measure the important role played by the CGPCS, its value addition to maritime security and its relevance to create synergies and to deepen our understanding of threats being posed today.
- Before going further, I would like to thank the Danish Shipping for providing facilities and hosting us in such an historic and fantastic place. Your support shows how it is crucial to work jointly with the private sector that is directly affected by insecurity at sea. I also wish to thank University of Copenhagen for its support in organizing our meeting today.

Dears Friends,

- Your presence here illustrates your commitment to the CGPCS and the importance given to the fight against piracy. We all know here that the decrease in piracy incidents over the last years is a clear indication of the success of the strong mobilization of the International Community as well as of the regional States. But the more important is that we do agree on the necessity to maintain our efforts to avoid the resurgence of piracy off the Coast of Somalia.
- In this regard, I would like to commend the decision of the European Union to extend the mandate of the EUNAVFOR Atalanta until 2020. Indeed, the International Community has still a direct role to play in the region to secure major maritime routes of the Western Indian Ocean. We have shared interests and the CGPCS is the expression of these common interests, be it for trade, energy or fisheries, among others.

Dear Friends,

- I am sure that we all agree here that the CGPCS is a platform that is still needed since it is the only forum where so much actors from public, military and private sectors, at national, regional and international levels, can meet, discuss and build up synergies.
- But it is now 10 years since the Contact Group was established. It is time to discuss and agree on the future of the CGPCS.
- Following the decision of the 21st plenary session, the CGPCS secretariat commissioned a study on the future of the CGPCS. This study, carried out by Prof. Christian Bueger of the University of Copenhagen, highlights the links between maritime piracy and other maritime crimes and threats and recognizes that the environment in which we are evolving has changed.
- The question then arises as to whether the mandate of the CGPCS should be extended to adopt a holistic approach to

maritime issues and challenges in the Western Indian Ocean. The results of this study, which will be presented to you, are avenues for reflection and a basis for discussion that should lead us to a consensual dynamic as from the 22nd plenary session of the CGPCS on 20 June in Mauritius. I invite you to express freely your views on this important matter.

- Allow me to take this opportunity to highlight the leading role that the Republic of Mauritius intends to play in maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean. Our island country is first and foremost an Ocean-State and it is indeed essential for us to project our legitimate ambitions for growth into a safe and secure regional space. It is in this sense that the Republic of Mauritius and the Indian Ocean Commission, in partnership with the European Union, organized last year a Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security, which made it possible to consolidate regional and international commitment in this field and to raise the issue of maritime security to the top of the national and regional development agenda.
- The second edition of this Ministerial Conference will be held in a few days' time, on 19 June, and will provide an opportunity to take stock of the actions undertaken, such as the strengthening of the maritime safety architecture through two regional agreements signed by seven countries in the region under the aegis of the IOC and the EU.
- The 22nd plenary session of the CGPCS, which will follow the Ministerial Conference, will therefore be part of a political dynamic that makes maritime security a prerequisite for development and, in particular, for the emergence of a blue economy that will generate jobs and growth. In this respect, the future of the CGPCS seems to me to be an important issue since we can all benefit from this tool to create the condition for a long term and concrete zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. To do so,

we should continue to expand our interest on a wider range of maritime crimes and threats bearing in mind the link with piracy. That is what we will have to discuss, among other things.

- Let me conclude by thanking you all for coming to Copenhagen. I see it as an expression of your commitment to our Contact Group.
- I wish also to thank you all for your support to our Chairmanship that will end by December 2019. We have delivered to best of our ability and invite... So that our meeting should also be an opportunity to consider the next Chair of our Contact Group that should remain in the region. To me, the Republic of Kenya may consider this opportunity.
- I wish you all frank and fruitful exchanges. Unfortunately, I will have to leave at 1pm but rest assured that I will be very attentive to your conclusions that will enable us to prepare the 22nd plenary session under the best possible conditions.
- I am pleased to declare the Meeting of the Friends of the Chair of the CGPCS now open.
- Thank you for your kind attention.