



CONTACT GROUP ON PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA COMMUNICATION OF THE CHAIR ON PREMATURE RELEASE OF CONVICTED PIRATES

13 August 2019

The International Community and States in the region have put in much efforts to ensure that acts of piracy are not left unpunished following the UN Resolution 1851 in a context of lawlessness off the Coast of Somalia.

The current CGPCS Chair has issued two communiqués (dated 7th September 2018 and 2nd August 2019) strongly condemning these premature releases of convicted pirates by Puntland and Somaliland Authorities which compromises the extensive collective efforts of the international community to combat and suppress piracy off the coast of Somalia in order to guarantee the safety and security of the Western Indian Ocean. This acts equally stands to erode the mechanisms, including arrest, prosecution and imprisonment that has been put in place to combat the scourge of piracy and other forms of illicit crimes. These also tantamount to annul the cooperation that exists between the parties in relation to the repatriation of sentenced pirates on humanitarian grounds.

The Chair hopes that media reports of the potential release of 30 prisoners by Puntland Authorities earlier this month are no longer accurate and supports the strong messages from a number of countries against such releases.

Meanwhile, the Chair has taken initiatives to bring the matter to the attention to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council.

A CGPCS Friends of the Chair Meeting will be required to discuss the matter and make proposals to prevent a resurgence of attempts to prematurely release of convicted pirates as well as for remedial actions, if any, for submission to the United Nations Security Council.

**Port Louis, Mauritius
13 August 2019**