



## PRESS RELEASE

### **KENYA taking over the CGPCS Chair as from January 2020**

The Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) held its 22<sup>nd</sup> plenary session on 20 June 2019 back to back with the Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in Mauritius. A series of activities including the Working Groups meetings were organised to mark this week dedicated to Maritime Security.

Organised by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) together with the Republic of Mauritius (current Chair of the Contact Group in the name of the IOC), this plenary session brought together more than 200 participants from over 30 States and regional and international organisations to discuss on way forward of this platform focused on piracy created following a UN Resolution in December 2008.

Kenya, actively involved in the maritime domain in the Western Indian Ocean, will be the third country in the region to chair this International platform as from January 2020 for a 2-years mandate after Mauritius (through IOC) and Seychelles. While there is a clear indication of the appropriation of maritime issues by riparian countries in the region, Kenya through its accession to the CGPCS Chairmanship is ensuring its long-lasting legacy and is “*engaged to build on this solid foundation so as to take the Group to even greater heights and cement the legacy of the Group as an effective mechanism in fighting piracy*”, stated the Cabinet Secretary for Defence of the Republic of Kenya, Amb. Raychelle Omamo, at the Plenary session in Mauritius.

#### ***CGPCS, a flexible and independent mechanism focused on piracy and related crimes***

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year of existence this year, the CGPCS is currently at a crossroads. While all the CGPCS members agreed on the fact that piracy has been contained but not eradicated and that they will continue to engage efforts to combat piracy and its root causes, there was also a pledge to review the *modus operandi* of the structure to ensure effective coordination and collaboration between stakeholders. “*The threat of piracy remains present, therefore we should maintain on our guard and continue the policing of the seas*”, underlined Hon. Nandcoomar Bodha, minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius and Chair of the CGPCS.

The current Chair initiated a strategic review of the Contact Group which was drafted by the University of Copenhagen. The outcomes of the report were presented at the Friends of the Chair meeting in Copenhagen on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and approved by all members during the plenary session in Mauritius. One of the objectives of this review is to ensure that the mechanism remains flexible and inclusive. The unique combination of technical, legal and political representation under one umbrella enables to have a comprehensive approach to piracy and related crimes.

Furthermore, the report also stressed on the issue related to two working groups focused on Operations at Sea and Regional Capacity Building respectively. Lifeblood’s of the Contact Group, their roles have to be reviewed to ensure coherence and effectiveness with the overall



new vision. The related groups will however keep their activities and continue to report the valuable information to the CGPCS plenaries.

While, decision was made to close down the Working Group Operations at Sea, the Regional Capacity Building Work Group will be transferred to the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) mechanism to ensure effective coordination. The idea is to use existing mechanisms to strengthen collaboration with partners but also prevent duplication of initiatives in the region.

#### For more information:

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- CGPCS Website, [click here](#)
- Report on Piracy status in Eastern Africa, [click here](#)

