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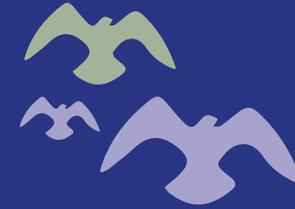
#MASE PROGRAMME

A strong partnership for a safe and secure maritime domain



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REPORT OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP

CONTACT  GROUP
ON PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA



Republic of Mauritius



This report presents the major achievements of the Republic of Mauritius during its two-year mandate as Chair of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) in the name of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). The CGPCS Secretariat was supported by the IOC Secretariat.

This report was prepared by the CGPCS Secretariat handled by IOC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius as outgoing Chair of CGPCS with the support of the EU¹ -funded MASE programme.

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PREFACE

by Honourable Nandcoomar Bodha, Minister of Foreign
Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

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The Republic of Mauritius had the honour of taking on the Chairmanship of the *Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia* on 1 January 2018 for a two-year mandate.

By dint of this new nomination, Mauritius became the second State in the Western Indian Ocean region, after the Republic of Seychelles, to chair this International Ad-Hoc platform focused on Maritime Piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Convinced of its usefulness to combat the scourge of piracy, Mauritius welcomes and will continue to support the Resolution 1851 of 18 December 2008 under the United Nations Security Council, which has enabled the creation of a platform for coordination of various actions undertaken by the International community to fight piracy in this region.

The two-year Chairmanship was enriching with new perspectives ahead for Mauritius and the overall region in a domain which is highly dependant of the International Community. While one of the objectives was to ensure coherence for a *“Leaving a long-lasting legacy for the region”*, Mauritius has also been driving the necessary review of the Contact Group strategic orientations to be in line with current and future maritime challenges.

Notwithstanding the fact that *“Piracy is contained but not eradicated”*, the emergence of other maritime related crimes growing exponentially is a serious cause of concern. It is in this vein that Mauritius has endeavoured to orientate the Contact Group towards a permanent structure in view of extending its mandate to cover other maritime crimes. Though the proposal for a permanent structure was not retained, it has triggered deeper reflections on the future of this forum – leading to the CGPCS Strategic Review drafted by the University of Copenhagen and the future setting up of a Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG), which main focus will be to develop a strategic plan to map out future CGPCS priorities.

Maritime Security has been set as a priority for Mauritius – as an Ocean-State. Its active involvement in CGPCS and other related initiatives clearly shows the political will to contribute to strengthen maritime security in the region.

As one of the signatory countries of the 2 MASE regional agreements, Mauritius contributes to build a safe and secure region through the development of a regional maritime security architecture – materialised by the two regional centres, the RMIFC² and RCOC³, based in Madagascar and Seychelles respectively.

In this perspective, Mauritius has brought its humble contribution in creating awareness on different maritime insecurities impacting the sustainable development of an ocean economy in the region – through the organisation of two Ministerial Conferences on Maritime Security. The outcomes of the two international conferences which brought High-level participations at regional and international level including CGPCS members, led to enhanced cooperation with key stakeholders at regional and international level in the maritime domain.

Mauritius will host the third Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in 2020 and a Summit on Maritime Security in 2021.

Furthermore, Mauritius has viewed the premature release of the Somali pirates with concern as it has undermined the collective actions of the international community in combating and suppressing piracy off the coast of Somalia. We have also called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to inform the Security Council about the premature release of the pirates. The untimely release of these prisoners is contrary to provisions of Articles 5 and 7.1 of the MoU signed by Seychelles and the competent authorities in Somaliland in the margins of the London Conference on Somalia in February 2012. This clearly compromises the agreed arrangements providing for the repatriation of such individuals to their home country to serve their sentence on a humanitarian basis.

PREFACE

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Due to the collective actions of the international community, acts of piracy have dwindled over the past two years. Only 9 incidents of attempted piracy and armed robbery of vessels were recorded in 2018. We should however remain on our guard as piracy has not been eradicated. The CGPCS has proven its importance and this structure should be maintained. It is with pleasure and with a sense of accomplishment that I have passed on the Chairmanship of the CGPCS to Ambassador Monica JUMA Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kenya. Mauritius will continue to be an active member of the CGPCS.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

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REGIONAL LEGACY:

The IOC takes over CGPCS Chair after Republic of Seychelles

Handing over Seychelles to Mauritius.



The IOC was appointed as upcoming Chair during the 20th CGPCS Plenary session held in Mauritius in 2017. Mauritius, which was chairing the IOC, acceded as Chair of CGPCS, in the name of IOC. The IOC Secretariat then acted as CGPCS secretariat to support the Chair.

Mauritius succeeded to the Republic of Seychelles as from 1 January 2018 for a period of 2 years. A formal Handing Over ceremony took place in December 2017 in the presence of High-level dignitaries and CGPCS members.

The engagement of Mauritius in this platform is not new. Actively involved in the working groups, Mauritius has been co-chairing with Portugal the Virtual Legal Forum. The country has also co-organised the 20th Plenary session in close collaboration with IOC and Seychelles.

While Seychelles has been the 1st regional State to chair the Contact Group, the Hand Over to Mauritius marked an important step towards the willingness of regional countries to actively engage in this international forum.

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ORGANISATION OF PLENARIES

One of the main responsibilities of the Chair is to organise annually a plenary session with all the members of CGPCS and call at any time extraordinary plenaries in case of emergency.

21st plenary of the CGPCS, Nairobi, Kenya, 12-13 July 2018

Mauritius as Chair of the CGPCS organised its first plenary session in July (12-13) 2018 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON), Nairobi, Kenya. This event was co-organised by the CGPCS Secretariat, the IOC and UNODC⁴.

This meeting brought together over 200 participants from over 20 States and 30 regional and international organisations. This plenary session reiterated the commitment of the region and that of the international community to continuously combat piracy and its root causes.



The 21st plenary session of the CGPCS, chaired by Hon. Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius and Chair of the IOC, was an opportunity to assess the status of maritime piracy in the Western Indian Ocean. In 2017, the cost of piracy in the Western Indian Ocean was estimated at 1.4 billion US dollars according to the latest figures from Oceans Beyond Piracy of One Earth Foundation.

Representatives of EU NAVFOR and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) identified rare cases of piracy since the resurgence of attacks at the beginning of 2017 – namely two attacks in November 2017, whereby the alleged perpetrators are awaiting trial

in Seychelles and one attack at the beginning of this year. «*We must not ease our efforts*» stressed the Chairperson of CGPCS, Hon. Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo, as in the same timeframe, observations from EU NAVFOR / CMF reported an overall surge in maritime incidents. Members of the Contact Group shared this view, and the European Union also indicated its decision to extend the mandate of the EU NAVFOR Atalanta mission until December 2020. Furthermore, the participants of the plenary session stressed on the importance of halting the threat of piracy as a whole.

In the same line, the Cabinet Secretary Defence of Kenya, Raychelle Omamo, observed: «*We must fight these ills – piracy and terrorism – in tandem because in many ways terrorism extends into the waters through piracy and piracy extends to land through terrorism.*» Hon. Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo also declared: «*we cannot fight effectively nor permanently remove piracy, if we do not tackle all the crimes and threats that feed on piracy or are fuelled by piracy. That is why I suggested that we start thinking about the possible extension of the mandate of the Contact Group and that the outcomes be submitted to the next plenary session for debate.*» Participants of the plenary thus agreed with the Chair's proposal to reflect on the future of the Contact Group, aiming, to confer to it, a more pro-active role and a broader mandate enclosing all crimes and threats directly related to piracy.

Members of CGPCS have confirmed the usefulness of this forum which allows to exchange on on-going initiatives and offers a comprehensive outlook on the activities of the fight against piracy. For instance, some initiatives are closely linked namely the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the **MA**ritime **SE**curity (**MASE**) programme implemented by regional organisations in Eastern and Southern Africa (IGAD⁵, COMESA⁶, EAC⁷, IOC) under European Union funding.

22nd CGPCS Plenary Session, Mauritius, 20 June 2019



The CGPCS 22nd Plenary session was held back to back with the 2nd Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security on 20 June 2019 in Mauritius.

A series of activities including the Working Groups meetings were organised to mark this week dedicated to Maritime Security.

Organised by the IOC together with the Republic of Mauritius, 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-year 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 Contact Group to even greater heights and cement the legacy of the Contact 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 10th year of existence in 2019, 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 28th 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.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

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MARITIME SECURITY CONFERENCES

under the aegis of Mauritius and IOC

1st Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security, 28-29 April 2018



New agreements, actions and political commitment for regional Maritime Security

Mauritius in collaboration with IOC through the EU-funded MASE Programme, hosted a Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in April 2018. The Ministerial Conference was attended by some 180 delegates from twenty-three countries and from fifteen regional/international organisations.

The event led to the signing of four agreements on enhanced cooperation between States for improved Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean region. Two major agreements were signed under the regional **MA**ritime **SE**curity programme (**MASE**): the first deals with the exchange and sharing of maritime information through the RMIFC based in Madagascar; the second concerns the coordination of joint operations through the RCOOC based in the Seychelles.

The two MASE agreements were signed by the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Republic of Madagascar, the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles. Other States in the region are expected to adopt these agreements, which remain open to partners wishing to contribute to regional Maritime Security, a prerequisite to ensure stability of these world-wide maritime routes.

During the Conference's official opening ceremony, Prime Minister Pravind

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Jugnauth, who witnessed the signing of cooperation agreements between the IOC and the Republic of Mauritius with the UNODC on the fight against illegal trafficking, stressed on the link between Security and Development. «As small islands, often devoid of land based natural resources, we aspire to develop our vast maritime spaces and build a new chapter for our economies around the ocean. For this to materialise, our seas need to be safe and we need to unlock the required resources to do so,» he insisted. The Prime Minister added: «Alone, none of our countries can fight the illegal traffic in our oceans, the spoliation of our seas or the growing threats to insecurity in our waters. Even collectively, the challenges are major issues. But if we can agree on ways and means to work together and to share information and coordinate our actions, we can surely do better than we are doing now. Let us join forces to make this happen.»

Furthermore, this Conference provided an update on the challenges and needs of regional and international actors in the field of maritime security. Ten themes were debated, giving rise to a set of recommendations which has been transcribed in an Action Plan. This Conference contributed to the enhancement of maritime security architecture through the adoption of the "Mauritius Declaration on Maritime Security". Based on the recommendations of the declaration, the IOC Secretariat has put up a roadmap, highlighting the immediate, medium- and long-term priority actions with regards to maritime security and safety.

2nd Ministerial conference on maritime security, Mauritius, 19 June 2019



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

INTERNATIONAL MOBILISATION

for maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean

For one week in June 2019, Maritime Security was at the heart of the regional agenda. Over more than 200 high-level delegates from some 40 countries and international organisations travelled to Mauritius for the 2nd Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean. The two-day conference (18 and 19 June) was followed by the 22nd plenary session of the CGPCS on 20 June.

These meetings provided an opportunity to take stock of maritime security challenges and ongoing initiatives to address them. In all, some 30 initiatives to combat the various aspects of maritime insecurity (piracy, drug trafficking, human trafficking, armed attacks, illegal fishing, money laundering, terrorist risk, pollution, etc.) are being implemented in the Western Indian Ocean region. The participants in the Ministerial Conference therefore called for effective coordination of all these initiatives to avoid duplication and ensure the long-term security of the Western Indian Ocean, which is crossed by major maritime routes of global importance.

Among these initiatives, the mechanisms for information exchange and coordination of actions at sea, set up through the MASE programme funded by the European Union, and the activities of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and its Jeddah amendments have received particular attention since they form the basis of a regional maritime security architecture adapted to the needs of the region. The regional centres established through these initiatives make it possible to better coordinate actions at sea and to facilitate the flow of information between national security administrations. The tools deployed under the MASE programme at the RMIFC in Madagascar and the RCOC in the Seychelles will make it possible to monitor the maritime situation in real time and rapidly identify suspicious behaviour or cases of distress at sea for coordinated intervention. The participants also expressed their positive assessment of the participation of international partners in operations on the ground, in particular naval forces (EU NAVFOR Atalanta, CMF, the Independent Deployers and NATO).

The Conference also took stock of the progress made since the convening of the first Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security held in April 2018. It expressed satisfaction at the fact that most of the activities of the action plan, which was adopted at the first Conference, had already been completed or were in progress.

During the past two years, the Chair and the Head of Secretariat of CGPCS have been directly or indirectly supporting and participating to CGPCS members' activities.

HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM ON CAPACITY BUILDING

for Maritime Security Nairobi, Kenya, 2 March 2018

The CGPCS Secretariat participated in the symposium and launch of the Best Practice Toolkit – Mastering Maritime Security organised by SAFE SEAS. The booklet is the outcome of a research project “*Safeseas: A study of Maritime Security Capacity Building in the Western Indian Ocean*”. This 18-month project was co-led by the School of Law and Politics at Cardiff University and the Global Insecurities Centre at the University of Bristol.

Key guidelines and best practices for the coordination, programming and implementation of maritime security capacity building and maritime security reform were developed at the symposium.

PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE 21ST CGPCS PLENARY SESSION, Mauritius, 30 April 2018

A preparatory meeting of the 21st CGPCS Plenary Session was held in Mauritius on 30 April 2018, in the margins of the first Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security. The CGPCS meeting assessed the current threat of piracy in the region, analysed matters arising from the 20th plenary session and took stock of the progress of the CGPCS Working Groups, other Groups/Task Forces and the UN Trust Fund. It also identified key issues that could be included in the draft agenda of the next plenary session.

SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY CONFERENCE

Kenya, 26-28 November 2018



The CGPCS Secretariat participated in the International Conference on the Sustainable Blue Economy that was held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 26-28 November 2018.

Over 5000 delegates and High officials from different States, regional/international organisations participated to this international meeting.

CGPCS through IOC, EU NAVFOR, UNODC, FAO⁸, COMESA, EAC, IGAD, EU, RCBWG⁹, MASE programme participated to an exclusive side event dedicated to maritime security initiatives in the Western Indian Ocean. This event has enabled all the key stakeholders to:

1. **Create** awareness on various maritime crimes and threats which dampen regional economic growth and the emergence of a sustainable Blue economy.
2. **Show** national and regional ownership by coastal States and RECs w.r.t maritime security matters.
3. **Showcase** MASE programme's comprehensive approach to address maritime security issues through its 5 result areas.
4. **Put forward** the regional cooperation between RECs and International Community.

FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR STRATEGIC MEETING

Copenhagen, Denmark, 27-28 May 2019

A Friends of the Chair Strategic Meeting was held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 27-28 May 2019. A report entitled “*Towards a Maritime Security Architecture for the Western Indian Ocean; A Strategic Review for the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS)*” was presented and discussed by the participants. The report highlighted the importance of having a continuation of the CGPCS since piracy in the Western Indian Ocean has been contained but not eradicated. Several other maritime security challenges persist in the region and the CGPCS needs re-orientation for optimal result.

It was recommended that the CGPCS be maintained albeit with some changes in its structure as a mechanism to ensure better coordination and increased efficiency for the fight against piracy.

20 ACTIVITIES

SHARED AWARENESS AND DE-CONFLICTION (SHADE) MEETING

19-20 November 2019



The CGPCS Secretariat participated for the first time as observer in the Shared Awareness and De-Confliction (SHADE) meeting in Bahrain from 19-20 November 2019. Organised by EU NAVFOR and CMF, this international political platform brought together Naval Forces representatives and the shipping industry. Held biannually, this platform intends to develop structured strategy aimed at coordinating international naval activities to combat piracy. It aims at focusing on operations on particular areas of the various national concerns and avoid both duplication of efforts and conflicts of political intent.



CGPCS RESPONSES
to premature release of pirates in Somalia

CGPCS RESPONSES

The CGPCS Chair was called to intervene at different occasions on the premature release of pirates in Somalia.

1ST COMMUNIQUÉ, 7 SEPTEMBER 2018

Mauritius as Chair of the CGPCS issued a communiqué condemning the early release of a convicted pirate from Garowe Prison in Puntland without the consent of the arresting or convicting authorities.

2ND COMMUNIQUÉ, 2 AUGUST 2019

Mauritius as CGPCS Chair issued a communiqué on 2 August 2019 to strongly condemn the premature release of 19 prisoners by Somaliland. It also requested the United Nations Secretary-General to inform the United Nations Security Council of this release of the pirates for appropriate actions by the Security Council.

3RD COMMUNIQUÉ, 13 AUGUST 2019

The CGPCS was apprised on 30 July 2019 that Puntland was intending to release 30 convicted pirates. Mauritius issued a Communiqué calling upon a meeting of the Friends of the Chair to discuss the premature releases 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.

Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia (CGPCS).

The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, commonly abbreviated as CGPCS, is an international governance mechanism established in New York on January 14, 2009 to facilitate the discussion and coordination of actions among states and organisations to suppress Somali piracy. The CGPCS was established in response to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1851 (2008), later recalled and replaced with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1918 (2010). To date, more than 60 countries and international organisations have become part of this forum, all of which are working towards the prevention of piracy off the Somali coast.

The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

The Indian Ocean Commission has been actively involved in the Contact Group for many years now. From Co-Chair of one of the CGPCS Working Groups (RCBWG), IOC has also been supporting the Seychelles during its two-year mandate as the Contact Group Chair. In 2017, Mauritius became the Contact Group's Chair in the name of IOC, while IOC Secretariat continued to support the platform as its secretariat.

4 years later, IOC is still an active stakeholder of CGPCS and has unanimously been re-appointed by CGPCS members during the 22nd Plenary session to hold the Contact Group's secretariat during Kenya chairmanship which started in January 2020.

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FOR INFORMATION

¹European Union

²Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre

³Regional Coordination of Operations Centre

⁴United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

⁵Intergovernmental Authority on Development

⁶Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

⁷East African Community

⁸Food and Agriculture Organization

⁹Regional Capacity Building Working Group



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