

Closing Remarks by

Dr. Monica Juma, (Oxon), CBS,

Cabinet Secretary for Defence of the Republic of Kenya and

Chairperson of the

Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS)

Excellencies ;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have reached the end of a busy and I would say fruitful day. We have heard diverse presentations from European Naval Force (*EUNAVFOR*) Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), Law Enforcement Task Force (LETF), and Virtual Legal Forum (VLF), the Regional Capacity Building Working Group as well as an update by the Shipping Industry. Based on the work by the Law Enforcement Task Force (LETF), I encourage member states to pursue prosecutions against pirate leaders as a key element of our deference strategy, and requests UNODC to continue to support the coordination of the LETF effort and monitor and provide updates on pirate Kingpins to support this effort. I further recognize the work of the Hostage Support Partnership for their efforts over the last decade to rescue over 172 “forgotten hostages” in Somalia and meet the CGPCS goal of “zero ships zero hostages”. I also encourage Hostage Support Partners to

lend their support and knowledge to bring to freedom the remaining non piracy hostages in Somalia. I look forward to seeing better coordination of Regional Capacity building initiatives now that this was transferred to the Djibouti Code of Conduct Framework now strengthened with a strong governance framework.

In this pandemic period, the challenges for crew change that also extend to challenges for placement of armed guards on board vessels will mean more risk to shipping, noting that the crime of piracy is not eradicated. We therefore need to be alert and ensure that we do not compromise on the implementation of the Industry's best management practice as agreed. I will also follow closely the developments of the premature release of pirates and remain alert and mobilize members on a need basis. Noting the global effort by all players in suppressing piracy, efforts by the Hostage Support Partners and International Seafarers Welfare Assistance Network (ISWAN) in securing release of all seafarers, I encourage all of us to maintain the momentum in collaboration in ensuring the safety and security of our international waters in the Western Indian Ocean. With the new Trust Fund Board coming in, I look forward to receiving more proposals for membership to keep it vibrant and operational for its remaining duration.

We have also considered the proposals for the Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG). I appreciate all your contributions towards enhancement of the group's Terms of Reference and trust that we can have this endorsed in the 23rd Plenary.

Excellencies, Friends of the Chair;

Allow me dear colleagues on your behalf thank the Indian Ocean Commission and Kenya's Home Based Secretariat in keeping a tab on what needs to be done and timely dissemination of information. As earlier reiterated, it is my commitment to take the CGCPS to greater heights in tandem with the rallying call of ***“Leaving a long-lasting legacy for the region”*** in fighting piracy. Even as we close the meeting, I propose the date for the 23rd Plenary to be the **last week of November/ First week of December 2020**. Should there be any need for changes; the same will be communicated to you in good time.

With these remarks, I thank you for your participation and contribution to this meeting and look forward to seeing you in the 23rd Plenary.