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PROTECTION OF VITAL SHIPPING LANES

Seoul High-Level Meeting on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document reports on the outcome of the Seoul High-Level Meeting on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	6.2
<i>High-level action:</i>	6.2.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	6.2.2.1
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 4
<i>Related document:</i>	C 102/14/1

1 A High-Level Meeting on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, between 9 and 10 June 2009, in conjunction with the Third Seoul International Maritime Forum held on 8 June 2009. Both events were organized by the Government of the Republic of Korea, with a contribution by the Government of Japan and in cooperation with IMO.

2 The purpose of the Seoul High-Level Meeting was to provide an opportunity for discussion with the aim of supporting mechanisms and programmes of cooperation to prevent and suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia. The Meeting discussed, among other issues, the need for capacity building, implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the need for more coordination in the relevant military operations.

3 The Meeting adopted a Statement, a copy of which is set out in the annex.

Action requested of the Council

4 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document.

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ANNEX
SEOUL STATEMENT
ON
PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

Seoul, Republic of Korea on 10 June 2009

The Government of the Republic of Korea, with contribution by the Government of Japan and in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization (hereinafter referred to as “IMO”), hosted the Seoul High-Level Meeting on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (hereinafter referred to as “the Seoul High-Level Meeting”).

The purpose of the Seoul High-Level Meeting was to provide an opportunity for discussions with the aim of supporting mechanisms and programmes of cooperation to prevent and suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia, and to enhance the safety of navigation, environmental protection and maritime security in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean areas.

The Seoul High-Level Meeting was attended by delegations from:

Australia, China, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, France, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States and Yemen and an observer delegation from Chile,

by representatives from the following intergovernmental organizations:

Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), European Commission (EC), European Union Naval Forces (EUNAVFOR), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), League of Arab States, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS),

and by representatives from the following non-governmental organizations:

BIMCO, International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), International Maritime Bureau (IMB), Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), and the International Group of P+I Clubs (IGP+I),

The Seoul High-Level Meeting,

RECOGNIZING the continued strategic importance of the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean areas to regional and global seaborne trade, legal fishing activities, and the need to restore the safety and security of those areas and to ensure that they remain open to shipping at all times,

EXPRESSING serious concern over the rising incidence of piracy and armed robbery in waters off the coast of Somalia,

RECALLING that international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982, sets out the legal framework applicable to combating piracy and armed robbery at sea, as well as other ocean activities,

NOTING resolution 63/111 on oceans and the law of the sea adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, at its sixth-third session on 5 December 2008, and the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1816, 1838, 1846, and 1851 adopted in 2008,

RECALLING the achievements of the Sub-regional meeting held in Djibouti from 26 to 29 January 2009 (hereinafter referred to as “Djibouti Meeting”) and, in particular, the adoption of the Code of Conduct concerning the repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (hereinafter referred to as “the Djibouti Code of Conduct”), which became effective on 29 January 2009,

RECOGNIZING that the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (hereinafter referred to as “the Contact Group”) has already met three times this year, and is effectively fulfilling its role as an international cooperation mechanism to act as a common point of contact between and among States and international/regional organizations on all aspects of combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in the waters off the Coast of Somalia,

NOTING that political stability and the rule of law in Somalia would contribute in great measure to the suppression of piracy,

NOTING FURTHER the need for a comprehensive approach which includes considerations for environmental protection and dumping of toxic waste and effective fisheries management focusing on the issue of illegal fishing off the coast of Somalia and adjacent waters, such as the Gulf of Aden, to address the poverty and instability that may contribute to conditions conducive to piracy,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the concerns over the human suffering of the victims of piracy, and the importance of securing the release of the vessels and crews which have become targets of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships,

DESIRING FURTHER to promote greater regional cooperation and thereby enhance their effectiveness in the prevention, interdiction, prosecution, and punishment of those persons engaging in piracy and armed robbery against ships on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States,

NOTING the desires of Coastal States to lessen the burden of their expenses to prosecute suspected pirates,

NOTING FURTHER the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia adopted in Tokyo, Japan on 11 November 2004, and the efforts of the Coastal States which are contributing to the decrease of the incidence of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia,

WELCOMING the initiatives of IMO, the Contact Group, the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the European Commission, the African Union, and other relevant international/regional organizations to provide training, technical assistance and other forms of capacity building to Governments,

CONFIRMS THAT:

- (a) Governments should be encouraged to support the projects proposed by IMO, other relevant international/regional organizations and individual States, for the suppression of piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of Somalia and for the enhancement of the safety of navigation and environmental protection in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean areas;
- (b) Governments should assist their shipping industry in applying and continuously improving the Best Management Practices, which were transmitted to the Contact Group and subsequently adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee of IMO at its 86th session (27 May to 5 June 2009) and promulgated under MSC.1/Circ.1332;
- (c) Governments recognize the present information gap, and should accordingly promote and assist the exchange of information between the fishing sector and other concerned stakeholders in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean areas, taking into account guidance contained in MSC.1/Circ.1332;
- (d) Governments should work further to develop the coordination of military operations in the Gulf of Aden and the western Indian Ocean, taking into account the work of the Contact Group;
- (e) Governments should work towards the effective implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct by considering to provide, to the extent appropriate, the necessary financial and technical contributions, directly or through IMO, for the establishment of mechanisms of cooperation under the Djibouti Code of Conduct, such as the provision of technical assistance and training, and the establishment of piracy information exchange centres in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen, and a regional training centre in Djibouti;
- (f) Governments of participants of the Djibouti Code of Conduct should designate national focal points to facilitate coordinated, timely, and effective information flow between Governments as laid out in the Code of Conduct, and participate in and consider to host Steering Committee Meetings to be attended by those national focal points as follow-ups to the 1st Steering Committee Meeting held on the margins of the Seoul High-Level Meeting;
- (g) Governments, international/regional organizations, and other stakeholders should be encouraged to take further action to bring more stability in Somalia and they recognized the importance of assisting capacity building efforts for Somalia and its neighbouring countries. In this context, Governments, international/regional organizations, and other stakeholders should be encouraged to contribute to the creation of the International Trust Fund to combat piracy to be established

following the decision taken by the Contact Group. The recent announcement of IMO of the intention to establish a multi-donor Trust Fund at IMO for the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct was welcomed;

- (h) Governments should be encouraged to increase law-enforcement involvement in the field and, to that end, make full use of existing international and regional mechanisms that coordinate and support law-enforcement activities, and consider the use of international channels for information exchange and;
- (i) Governments should endeavour to establish appropriate mechanisms for cooperation to facilitate prosecution of suspected pirates, and to provide appropriate support;

EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION to the Government of the Republic of Korea for the excellent arrangements made for, the facilities and generous hospitality provided during the Seoul High-Level Meeting; and to the Governments of Japan and the International Maritime Organization for their contribution to and cooperation in the preparations for the Seoul High-Level Meeting and in order to ensure its successful conclusion.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA will transmit this Statement to the United Nations, IMO and other international organizations as appropriate, and the Contact Group.
