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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies

Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document reports on the actions taken by the Secretariat to implement resolution A.979(24) on Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia

Action to be taken: Paragraph 18

Related documents: C/ES.23/17(a), C/ES.23/D, paragraph 17(a), resolution A.979(24), C 96/14(a)/1/Add.2 and C 96/14(a)/2

1 Operative paragraph 7 of resolution A.979(24) on Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia, requests the Secretary-General of the Organization, *inter alia*:

- “2 to continue monitoring the situation in relation to threats to ships sailing in waters off the coast of Somalia and to report to the Council, as and when appropriate, on developments and any further actions which may be required;
- .3 to establish and maintain co-operation with the Monitoring Group on Somalia; and
- .4 to consult with interested Governments and organizations in establishing the process and means by which technical assistance can be provided to Somalia and nearby coastal States to enhance the capacity of these States to give effect to the present resolution as appropriate, taking into account the outcome of the Sub-regional seminar on piracy and armed robbery against ships and maritime security held in Sana’a, Yemen, from 9 to 13 April 2005”.

2 This document reports on actions taken by the Secretariat in pursuance of the above requests of the Assembly.

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly asked to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

Threats to ships off the coast of Somalia

3 The Secretariat continues to issue monthly, quarterly and annual reports on acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, under the MSC.4/Circ. series. These are differentiated both by region and (in separate annexes) between acts of piracy and armed robbery actually “committed” and “attempted”. The annual report for the calendar year 2005 and the summary for the first quarter of 2006 have been issued under the symbols MSC.4/Circ.81 and MSC.4/Circ.85, respectively.

4 Following the unlawful seizure of the Republic of Korea-registered fishing vessel **Dong Won No.628** off the coast of Somalia on 4 April 2006, and in response to a request by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Secretary-General wrote to the Minister of Marine Transport and Ports of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, seeking a rapid and successful resolution of the issue, in particular the release of the crew. This has been followed up by further requests for information to the representatives of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, in connection with both the **Dong Won No.628** and the Panamanian-flagged product tanker **Lin 1**.

5 In response to these requests, the Minister of Marine Transport and Ports of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia advised that the situation of the two vessels still remained the same and that “the physical possibilities of the Federal Government are still limited to bring the required solution. But that does not mean that the Government is not making efforts. Contacts are being made with the elders, clan leaders, businessmen and the entire community of the remote coastal settlements where the problems are taking place. The Government is even talking to politicians who are originally from these localities to give a hand in solving the difficulties and all these initiatives will continue until we can achieve the objective.” The Minister further confirmed that he was aware of Assembly resolution A.979(24) which called for international intervention.

Co-operation with the Monitoring Group on Somalia

6 The Secretariat has established links with the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Security Council Division Sanctions Branch and, in particular, the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia. Following meetings at IMO in late 2004, the Monitoring Group was invited to participate in the aforementioned Sub-regional seminar on piracy and armed robbery against ships and maritime security, held in Sana’a. This event coincided with the end of the Monitoring Group’s mandate; however, following its re-establishment by UN Security Council resolutions 1587 (2005) of 15 March 2005 and 1630 (2005) of 14 October 2005, the Monitoring Group’s maritime specialist, Mr. Harjit Kelley, actively participated in the Sana’a follow-up sub-regional workshop on maritime security, piracy and armed robbery against ships for countries from the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden area held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, from 14 to 18 January 2006. The liaison and co-operation between the IMO Secretariat and the Monitoring Group continues.

Consultation with interested Governments and organizations on technical assistance for Somalia and nearby coastal States

Muscat workshop

7 In order to progress the implementation of Sana’a seminar resolution 1, the Organization convened (in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, from 14 to 18 January 2006) a follow-up sub-regional

workshop on maritime security, piracy and armed robbery against ships for those countries from the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden area, which had participated in the Sana'a seminar.

8 The aims of the Muscat workshop were to assess, promote and enhance the standard of national legislation, and national and regional co-ordination, communication and co-operation within and between States in the sub-region, in accordance with the agreed strategy detailed in Sana'a seminar resolution 1.

9 The Muscat workshop was hosted by the Government of the Sultanate of Oman and was supported by IMO with financial and in-kind assistance provided by the United Kingdom and by the Organization's Technical Co-operation Fund. Representatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia, INTERPOL, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the United Kingdom Transport Security Division, the Italian Navy and the United Kingdom Royal Navy attended the workshop and made valuable contributions.

10 Much of the workshop was focused on developing a Draft Agreement for Regional Co-operation, as submitted by Yemen with additional input from Egypt. The amended draft agreement has been forwarded to the capitals of the States concerned for further consideration and development into an *ad hoc* Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The workshop reaffirmed the need for continuing efforts to urge the international community to support the establishment of stability in Somalia as a vital means of preventing and limiting acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea.

11 During MSC 81 (10 to 19 May 2006), the delegation of Yemen advised the Committee that the Government of Yemen was currently engaged in diplomatic consultations with the Governments, which had participated in the Sana'a and Muscat events, in order to fix a date for the signature of the aforementioned MoU, hopefully later in 2006. In the interim, Djibouti, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen had already concluded diplomatic agreements to co-ordinate efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in areas adjacent to their coasts.

Mombasa meeting

12 The Secretariat participated in a regional meeting hosted by the Government of Kenya pursuant to resolution A.979(24), held in Mombasa from 23 to 24 January 2006, which had adopted short- and long-term work plans to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships, and planned to host, at an appropriate time in the future, a further meeting on this issue, in co-operation with the Organization.

MSC 81

13 In reporting (see also document C 96/14(a)/2) to MSC 81 on the unlawful seizure of the **Dong Won No.628**, the Republic of Korea, *inter alia*, thanked all parties concerned in rendering assistance to the crewmembers; emphasized its commitment to regional co-operation and co-ordination; and offered to fund fully a regional seminar/workshop for East African States, on combating piracy and armed robbery against ships.

14 The Secretary-General advised the Committee that the recently-inaugurated Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Mombasa and the two sub-centres under construction for SAR purposes in the United Republic of Tanzania and Seychelles would also have piracy-monitoring capability.

15 During MSC 81, the Secretary-General urged that United Nations Member States in a position to render assistance should do so as soon as possible and that, in particular, visiting warships and military aircraft in the area should remain vigilant, respond to any requests for help from ships being attacked, and take action to deliver offenders to the nearest country for judicial action. In this regard, MSC 81 noted that United Kingdom warships were currently in the region and would take appropriate action.

16 The delegation of Yemen further reported that the Yemeni Coastguard had successfully captured a group of pirates involved in an attack against a yacht 27 miles off the coast of Yemen and that they had been taken to Yemen for judicial proceedings.

Co-operation with other organizations

17 The Secretariat has continued to develop links with other international organizations and non-governmental organizations with an interest in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships and/or in providing assistance to Somalia. In addition to those mentioned in paragraph 7 above, these include the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Inter-regional Criminal Justice Research Institute, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United States Coast Guard, the Maritime Liaison Office (MARLO) Bahrain, the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) and the Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Association (MYBA).

Action requested of the Council

18 The Council is invited to note the above information and take action as it may deem appropriate.
