



## TWENTY-FOURTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE CONTACT GROUP ON PIRACY OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

Nairobi, Kenya; 27 January 2022

### Final Communiqué

The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) held its 24<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session in Nairobi on 27 January 2022, under the Chairmanship of Kenya.

The hybrid meeting registered 145 delegates for both online and in-person participation from 20 States and 37 regional and international organizations, including Australia, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Mauritius, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Seychelles, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, European Union, United Nations entities, multiple regional and international organizations, industry and academia.

In his opening remarks, the Chair noted that the 24<sup>th</sup> CGPCS Plenary was a special Plenary based on an agenda that is focussed on shaping the future of the Contact Group. The Chair recognised the great value of the CGPCS contributions to the successful suppression of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in maintaining dialogue at the highest levels within the United Nations. The Chair also acknowledged the important roles played by the CGPCS Working Groups and extended his appreciation to the hosting countries.

The CGPCS Plenary received and adopted a report by the Chair (Republic of Seychelles) of the Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG). It entailed proposals on how to develop a new strategic vision for the Contact Group and provide the core elements of a strategic framework that will enable the CGPCS to thrive and align with emerging threats within the broader region. The Plenary appreciated the report and agreed to urgently reposition the Contact Group as an active, problem-driven forum for strategic dialogue on maritime crime activities at sea in the Western Indian Ocean.

The CGPCS Plenary and the Friends of the Chair debated the name for a refocused Contact Group, which by consensus was agreed to be the "**Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean**".



The mandate of the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean would be in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (A/RES/76/72, 9 Dec 2021), which covered transnational organized crime committed at sea, including: illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; illicit trafficking in wildlife; smuggling of migrants; trafficking in persons and illicit trafficking in firearms; and threats to maritime safety and security, including piracy, armed robbery at sea, smuggling and terrorist acts against shipping, offshore installations and other maritime interests.

The CGPCS Plenary debated the modalities of the modified Contact Group, as recommended by the SPSG, to not establish Working Groups as had been done before but to be an agile platform for problem-driven strategic dialogue on illicit maritime activities in the Western Indian Ocean region by forging strong links with other forums that do similar work and organizing meetings to discuss specific issues of interest. The CGPCS Plenary agreed with the suggestions and reiterated the need to have a Standing Agenda (SA) to give some initial structure to future meetings along the lines of:

- SA 1. Operational and Maritime Domain Awareness – Facilitated by Shared Awareness and De-Confliction (SHADE)
- SA 2. Law Enforcement Cooperation - A combination of work and information from several legal forums across the Western Indian Ocean region facilitated by the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- SA 3. Capacity Building – Facilitated by The Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCOC)
- SA 4. Blue Economy and Industry Issues: Facilitated by industry and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)
- SA 5. Strategic Communications: Facilitated by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

The CGPCS Plenary requested that sitting members on the UN Security Council consider and include as reference the decisions of the 24<sup>th</sup> Plenary on changing the CGPCS role and mandate to broader issues, as well as the decision to change the name to Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean, in the upcoming revision of UNSCR 2608. The Chair reiterated the CGPCS invitation to the Government of Somalia to rejoin the Contact Group given the broader focus on the region and an expanded mandate.

The CGPCS Plenary noted the decision to close the UN Counter Piracy Trust Fund in June 2019 and welcomed the decision of the Trust Fund managers to provide a status report on the fund’s activities. CGPCS members noted that the refocused Contact



Group might need to explore a new rapid response funding mechanism should future funding opportunities be identified.

The Plenary appreciated and agreed to Kenya's willingness to Chair the Contact Group for a further period of one (1) year to ensure a smooth transition.

The next Plenary session under the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean will take place by December 2022, but other *ad hoc* meetings will be tabled in line with the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities in the Western Indian Ocean *modus operandi*.

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