



DCoC/JA NFPs Extraordinary Meeting on Red Sea Threats No 1

Virtual via Teams

Monday 18 December 2023

Record of the Meeting

1. The Signatory States of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Jeddah Amendment (hereinafter referred to as the DCoC/JA), and States eligible to sign these instruments (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Participants”), convened an extraordinary meeting of the DCoC/JA National Focal Points and the Friends of DCoC/JA to discuss the increasing threats to international shipping in the Red Sea area, held virtually, via TEAMS, on Monday 18 December 2023.

2. The meeting was chaired by Republic of South Africa, the Chair of the DCoC/JA Steering Committee, Mr. Metse Ralephenya and was attended by participants from the following Signatory State:

COMOROS	DJIBOUTI	ETHIOPIA	KENYA
JORDAN	MADAGASCAR	MALDIVES	MAURITIUS
MOZAMBIQUE	OMAN	SEYCHELLES	SOMALIA
SOUTH AFRICA	TANZANIA	YEMEN	

And representatives of the following Countries;

DENMARK, INDIA, United Kingdom, United States of America

And representatives of the following international organizations and Regional Centres:

CMF, CRIMARIO II, EU CAP SOMALIA, EU NAVFOR ATALANTA, IFC-IOR, IGAD, IOC, IMO INTERPOL, INTERPORTPOLICE, RCOC, RMIFC, RUSI, UNODC,

The full list of participants is attached as **Annex A**.

Aim

3. The aim of the meeting was to deliberate on recent developments on the threat against international vessels in the Red Sea Area and discuss areas of cooperation and information sharing.

Agenda

4. The meeting adopted the agenda that had been circulated prior to the meeting. The agenda is attached as **Annex B**

Threat Briefing Update CMF/EU NAVFOR ATALANTA

5. Commodore Dennis Philip from Combine Maritime Forces (CMF) began by noting that there is a variety of attack methods in the Red Sea Area. The Houthis have demonstrated ability to use drones in these attacks. There has been a pattern by the perpetrators of making announcements before and after the attacks. The attacks have been consistent and almost daily within the Red Sea area. It was noted that ships automatic identification systems (AIS) is being used to target the merchant vessels. CMF has a combined task force that is conducting patrols in the Red Sea and the same shall be expanded in the next few days.

6. EU NAVFOR ATALANTA provided a comprehensive outline of attacks on shipping since October 2023. They began by noting that Houthis have their own agenda in this war and what we see in the Red Sea isn't the full picture of what is happening in the whole region. They noted that the EU NAVFOR ATALANTA is ready, with the means and assets available, to support the region as they have been doing so far and called on all Signatory States to collaborate in managing the situation in the Red Sea Area. The attacks are disrupting international ships and movement of the same in the Red Sea Area. The Presentation is attached as **Annex C**

Jeddah Amendment Provisions to address the Red Sea Threats and call for action. Capt Getinet Abay (Ethiopia)Thematic Working Group Chair on Port and Ship Security and Coastal Installation

7. Capt. Getinet (Ethiopia) and the Chair of the DCoC/JA Thematic Working Group on Port and Ship and Security and Protection of vital Coastal Installations highlighted the relevant provisions of the Jeddah Amendment as the foundation for justification of involvement of the Participants; outlined the existing measures in place to protect ships; and called upon Participants to consider some coordination of the actions to be taken including but not limited to the coordination with International Navies. The full presentation is Annexed as **Annex D**.

Regional Perspectives from RCOC and RMIFC

8. Capt. Sam Gontier (Director RCOC) and Nicolas Fleury (International Liaison Officer (ILO)-France RMIFC) provided a brief on the RCOC's and RMIFC's perspectives. They shared the analysis of the provided by EUNAVFOR, CMF and DCoC/JA and provided some additional perspectives. The RMIFC reiterated that this disruption in the Red Sea will affect and impact maritime traffic as vessels get rerouted and costs increase as more time is spent on route to the ports. The presentation is Annexed as **Annex D**

Plenary/Open Discussion

9. Djibouti noted that the initiative taken by DCoC/JA to quickly meet and find means to address the situation in the Red Sea Area is commendable and looks forward to a complementing effort and coordination with international partners. He requested the need for this meeting to propose workable solutions and noted that the recommendations and report of this meeting be shared with IMO and the partners.

10. CMF noted that DCoC/JA has been requested to nominate a DCoC./JA International Liaison Officer to the CMF as a link between CMF and DCoC so that information can be shared and operations deconflicted.

11. Yemen commended the work of the DCoC/JA in calling together this meeting and reiterated the need for information sharing as an effective foundation for addressing the Red

Sea threats. It also called upon Member States /Naval Forces Operating in the region to implement the UN Security Council 2216 adopted on 14th April 2015 and therefore to stop , intercept and seize arms shipments destined to ports under Houthis control areas.

12. INTERPORTPOLICE noted that the DCoC/JA States have indeed taken a step in the right direction and the need to focus on addressing safety of navigation and maritime aspects, rather than the political situation, is welcome. He commended the DCoC Statement and recommended that it be adopted as the DCoC Signatory States' position. Within the context of its urging Participants to "contribute proactively to maritime situational awareness", he suggested that details of official actions taken by the official Navy and police force and other government and international actors be publicized so that they are not misreported as pirate activity.

13. Institute of Security Studies (ISS) requested Signatory States to consider the Addendum to the New York Memorandum on Good Practices for Interdicting Terrorist Travel, which serves as a valuable complement to the existing framework established by the Global Counter terrorism Forum (GCTF). The purpose of this addendum is to specifically focus on response actions within the maritime environment.

14. Somalia noted that there is an urgent need to have DCoC/JA Signatory States agree to have coordinated efforts to protect all the international vessels passing through Bab El-Mandeb strait that is an important maritime route which connects the Red sea to the Gulf of Aden, linking Europe and Asia through the Suez canal with the support of the International Forces operating in the Red Sea Area or about to operate in the region sooner until the situation improves describing that the recent attacks in the Red Sea were not caused by pirates.

15. India commended DCOC-JA for convening this very significant meeting. He stated that the current situation affects all in the region owing to indiscriminate attacks on maritime assets with crews, flags and cargo due for many States in the region. He appreciated the efforts of CMF, EUNAVFOR, RMIFC and RCOC for sharing their assessments of the situation and noted the need for seamless information flow between IFC-IOR and the 2 MASE Centers (RCOC and RMIFC). He reiterated India's commitment to DCOC –JA and that they are open to supporting DCoC-JA States wherever and whenever possible. He also noted the need to have a UN Resolution with support from DCoC/JA as this will assist in enhancing efforts in the Region. He noted India is available to support subject to necessary approvals and requested Signatory States to also be open to provide approvals within the shortest time possible.

16. IFC-IOR emphasized the need for collective maritime safety and security actions. He noted the increasing number of incidents with concern and spoke about IFC-IOR's coordination with all operational agencies in respect of the ongoing MV Ruen incident as well as other emerging threats. He indicated that IFC-IOR continues to stand by for closer interaction with international partners.

17. Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) suggested that deeper analysis be done to understand whether this is a temporary situation or may last long. He noted that containing the situation is more of the responsibility of major naval organisations such as the EUNAVFOR, the CMF and Independent Deployers (ID). As far as the DCOC and MASE are concerned, he is of the opinion that they need to focus more on improved collaboration with the EUNAVFOR/CMF/ID for a better understanding of the situation, providing a precise situation to all their members through the ISN and initiate work to develop resilience of the region against potential negative impacts. In concrete terms, there can be regular exchange of information among the mentioned, monitoring of the situation, analyzing the possible impact to the region, and mobilizing experts to advise on each of the possible impacts and collectively agree on measures on the part of the region. It would be possible to organize meetings to discuss

potential collective actions. He also noted that another important issue is to link up with Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities (CGIMA), instead of leaving it to initiate separate processes.

18. United States of America (USA) applauded the Steering Committee and the Signatory States of the DCoC/JA for the great initiative. He urged the Signatory States to issue a strong statement that treats and condemns pirates and Houthi actions as two distinct categories of threats, each requiring a strong response. He reported that the USS MASON continues to hold five suspected Somali pirates, all of whom self-confessed. The USA is working with Somalia on their disposition. In view of an apparent pirate attack also on the MV Ruen, he urged the Signatory States to keep working on countering piracy to manage if not eradicate it entirely.

19. EUCAP SOMALIA noted that is important that as much as the navies have been requested to coordinate, the Signatory States must also coordinate and speak as one voice and ensure there are no discrepancies.

20. The Director RMIFC noted the need to develop information sharing network between States and navies but also underscored the importance of developing an information sharing link with the maritime industry and encouragement of the maritime industry on the voluntary community reporting which will add insights to the threats in the Red Sea and how to effectively address the same.

21. Tanzania thanked the Chair, the Friends of the DCoC and all the presenters and noted that Tanzania, likewise, supports the Chair's Statement and recommendations given by the WG2 Chair on thematic area on ports and ship security and coastal installations, and urged all members to adopt the recommended resolutions as the "voice of the DCoC and a way forward.

Summary of Discussion and Way Forward

22. The following is a summary of the meeting outcomes:

- i. Signatory States agreed to adopt the recommendations noted in the Press Statement issued by the Chair of the Steering Committee on Thursday 14 December 2023 available here; [DCoC Statement](#). The Steering Committee calls upon:
 - a) Participating States to call on the Security Council of the United Nations to act with resolution on this matter in the same way that it addressed piracy off the coast of Somalia, including calling for additional naval units to provide security in the area;
 - b) International naval forces operating in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden area to coordinate their activities provide enhanced security including counter missile and drone protection for merchant ships;
 - c) Ship operators to ensure that all appropriate self-protection measures are implemented on board their ships, taking into account the guidance given by IMO and the industry, including the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code and Best Management Practices;
 - d) Merchant ships transiting the area to maintain close liaison with security forces and to follow their directions and guidance;

- e) Djibouti Code of Conduct signatory States to contribute proactively to maritime situational awareness and maritime law enforcement in support of international efforts; and
 - f) Border control and security authorities in Djibouti Code of Conduct signatory States to enhance action to stem the flow of weapons to combatant parties.
- ii. Signatory States and Partners agreed to work towards enhancing operational action including through;
 - a) improved coordination within the Signatory States, Regional Centres (IFC-IOR, RCOC and RMIFC) and amongst the international navies and include linkage to maritime industry through volunteer reporting mechanisms; and
 - b) sharing of maritime situational awareness data and maritime assets Signatory States are willing to be used in the area.
 - iii. Signatory States and Partners agreed to hold continuous meetings/reviews with International Partners with to keep a close look at the progress of the situation.
 - iv. Signatory States and Partners agreed to advise the Secretary-General of IMO on how the DCoC/JA can support addressing the threat to shipping in the Red Sea area and to submit a document on the same to the next session of the Maritime Safety Committee, with a view to securing an MSC resolution on the matter. A request from IMO SG to UNSG for a UNSCR in the region for combating such illicit maritime activities/maritime terrorism may be considered.
 - v. Participants noted the offer of an opportunity to send an International Liaison Officer (ILO) to CMF to act as a linkage between the DCoC Signatory States and CMF.
 - vi. Signatory States were asked to consider the Addendum to the New York Memorandum on Good Practices for Interdicting Terrorist Travel, which serves as a valuable complement to the existing framework established by the Global Counter terrorism Forum (GCTF). The purpose of this addendum is to specifically focus on response actions within the maritime environment.

Vote of thanks:

23. The Chair of the Steering Committee expressed his gratitude to all the members for their attendance, efforts, and commitment in implementing the DCoC/JA.

24. With no further business to discuss, the meeting concluded at 1621 hours EAT.

Annexes:

- Annex A- List of Participants
- Annex B- Agenda
- Annex C- Threat Briefing -EU NAVFOR ATALANTA
- Annex D- Jeddah Amendment Provisions and call of action
- Annex E- Regional Threat Update; RCOC and RMIFC

Annex A- List of Participants

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Extraordinary-Meeting-LIST-OF-PARTICIPANTS.pdf>

Annex B- Agenda

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Extraordinary-Meeting-Agenda.pdf>

Annex C- Threat Briefing -EU NAVFOR ATALANTA

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Extraordinary-Meeting-EUNAVFOR-Presentation.pdf>

Annex D- Jeddah Amendment Provisions and call for action.

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Extraordinary-Meeting-Brief-on-Jeddah-Amendment-Provisions-in-handling-attacks-against-commercial-ships.pdf>

Annex E- Regional Threat Update; RCOC and RMIFC

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Extraordinary-Meeting-Regional-Threat-Update-RCOC-and-RMIFC.pdf>