

Position Paper by the International Maritime Organisation Delegate of The Republic of Yemen

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Country : Republic of Yemen Committee: International Maritime Organisation

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Agenda : Combating International Piracy

“The only truly successful way to address the problem in the long term, is through a strategy that focused on deterrence, security, the rule of law and development. Our common goal must be a sustainable solution.” -Ban Ki Moon

The escalation of piracy at sea in recent years has prompted IMO to make combating it a central theme of its work this year. 62 attacks in past year with 13 vessels still being held by the Somali pirates, and the UNSC resolution calling all countries to provide naval support as a strong response to piracy underline the fact that the piracy problem is complex and has become too deeply entrenched for any one entity to deal with it effectively. The high stakes and relative success of the pirates has led to greater organization and acquisition of improved weaponry.

The scourge of Somalian piracy has hit Yemen hard. Due to proximity of Somalia to Yemen, the Yemeni economy has been hit the hardest. Yemeni merchants have cut down on the business scale reflected by a 25% reduction in cargo volumes handled at the port of Aden and other ports. The reduction in cargo volumes and increased cost of operations including insurance affects the entire maritime industry that employs thousands of people. The increased international patrolling in the region affects the local Yemeni fishermen, some of whom are mistaken for Somalian pirates due to their dark skins. The young age of the average Somali pirate and the large sums involved has the potential of attracting the unemployed Yemen youth into piracy. The piracy money finds itself into the local economy, feeding insurgency and lawlessness while giving strength to groups like the Al Qaeda.

Dearth of specific international laws covering the trial and detention of pirates caught in international waters adds to the problem. Further there is a high financial cost attached to keeping pirates under detention while they await trial. Due to these, Yemen has stopped detaining and trying Somali pirates submitted by International forces since 2009.

Piracy has a direct impact on the country. The Somali piracy acts target marine ships and commercial tankers in the international waters of the African Horn and Gulf Of Aden which has a negative effect on Yemeni economy. Yemen demands that security measures should be taken to maintain the national economic security.

People and government of Yemen remain strongly committed to the idea of safe and navigable international waters that provide a growth impetus for vibrant and healthy international maritime commerce. Yemen has established The Regional Information Centre to combat piracy and created Maritime Training Centre which specializes in securing ports with the help of coast guards. Of about the 750 pirates currently facing prosecution in eleven countries, Yemen has arrested 120 pirates since 2005. During 2008 and 2009, Yemen detained 62 pirates.

To be able to effectively combat piracy in International waters, Yemen would like to propose the following:

- 1.) Collaboration among the international community to secure the route of international navigation by means of a central organisation.
- 2.) Information sharing centre to monitor and issue piracy warnings across the network and liaise with international navies.
- 3.) Passage of law or treaty to enforce compulsory paper trail for all countries to track monies paid in ransom
- 4.) Passage of international laws regarding the legal position and trial of pirates detained in international waters.

While the problem of piracy cannot be removed in a day, effective and relentless effort shall ensure a piracy free Gulf of Aden, and Yemen remains committed to that.

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