



High-Level Meeting on the Implementation of the DCoC/JA,

Dar es Salaam, 28-30 November 2024

COMMUNIQUE

The International Maritime Organization pursuant to the request of Signatory States to the Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah Amendment and States eligible to sign these instruments, jointly with the United Republic of Tanzania and supported by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), convened the Seventh High-level Regional Meeting on Implementation of the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC/JA).

Representatives of Signatory States (Participants) and attendees from partner organizations, thanked the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, UNITAR and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), for organizing and hosting the Meeting at the Serena Hotel in Dar es Salaam from 28 to 30 November; acknowledged the generous in kind support and hospitality extended by the United Republic of Tanzania for the Meeting, and expressed its sincere gratitude to HE Professor Mbarawa Mnyaa Makame, Minister of Transport of the United Republic of Tanzania for the gracious hosting and support to the success of the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Lufunyo S. Hussein (United Republic of Tanzania) and co-chaired by Mr. Metse Ralephenya (Republic of South Africa and Chair of DCoC/JA SC).

The Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, provided a keynote address at the opening ceremony and drew attention to the need for all parties to work in cooperation, to develop meaningful action plans, to implement those action plans and to be able to demonstrate concrete success in order to secure further support in the future.

The primary objective of the High-level Meeting was to review the status of the implementation of the DCoC/JA, to follow up on agreed action points, and to discuss new challenges with a view to finding common solutions. It also discussed the recommendations of Working Group One (WG 1) on Information Sharing and provided direction on the operationalization of the DCoC Information Sharing Network (ISN) in line with the agreed strategy and roadmap, as well as coordinate regional efforts to combat illegal activities at sea, as provided for in the Jeddah Amendment.

Additionally, the meeting provided an opportunity to showcase developments of WG2 on the Coordination of capacity-building efforts, including proposals for the establishment of sub-working groups to cover all thematic areas contained in the Jeddah Amendment. Furthermore, the meeting facilitated discussions with the Friends of the DCoC focused on their support for regional priorities as captured in the DCoC Capacity Building Coordination Matrix, in order to ensure effective implementation of DCoC/JA.

The High-level Meeting built upon the outcomes of the Sixth DCoC High-level Regional Meeting on Implementation of the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct, held in Cape Town, Republic of South Africa from 24-26 October 2023 (the Cape Town Meeting); and was informed



by the outcomes of the “Regional Workshop on Development of the DCoC Regional Maritime Security Strategy (RMSS)”, held at the Jeddah Academy for Maritime Science and Security Studies from 10 to 21 November 2024 (the RMSS Workshop).

The High-level Meeting also addressed issues around the increasing maritime security threats in the region, with a particular emphasis on civil / military cooperation.

In support of these objectives, the Participants considered and adopted its **Resolution #1** on ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUP 3 ON OPERATIONAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AT SEA

Through this resolution, the Participants recognized that the successful implementation of the DCoC and its Jeddah Amendment needs a whole-of-government approach, making full use of all of the competences, skills and capabilities that national authorities can bring to bear, both civilian and military; and that agencies working together, sharing capabilities, is a “force multiplier”, increasing effective results while reducing costs to signatory States’ taxpayers.

The Participants also recognized the potential of national, regional and international naval forces to assist maritime law enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies to carry out their duties, thus demonstrating to Governments the benefits of effective maritime security. However, this will require close cooperation, coordination and communication between navies, law enforcement and civilian authorities, the Regional Coordination Operations Centre and between navies themselves at the national, regional and international levels. It will also require consistency and compliance with national legislation and international law.

To these ends, the Participants agreed:

- 1 to establish Working Group 3 on Operational Cooperation and Coordination at Sea.
- 2 To invite signatory States to the DCoC and the Jeddah Amendment and Friends of the DCoC to nominate suitable personnel from navies, law enforcement agencies and civilian authorities to serve as members of the Working Group.
- 3 To request the first meeting of Working Group 3, inter alia, to elect a chair and co-chair and to develop a draft terms of reference and work plan to be approved by the DCoC Steering Committee.
- 4 To invite the Friends of the DCoC to provide sufficient funding to the DCoC Trust Fund to facilitate the work of Working Group 3.

The participants further agreed on the need to:



- 1 Consider the issue of the “legal finish” within the context of operational coordination at sea;
- 2 Establish a regionally owned, shared vessels of interest (VOI) database, primarily to assist in countering illicit activities in the maritime domain as highlighted in the Jeddah Amendment.
- 3 Develop a standard lexicon of terminology for use with the ISN;
- 4 Improve visibility and promotion of DCoC work and achievements;
- 5 Submit requests for technical assistance to the IMO Secretariat through the DCoC Capacity Building Matrix; and
- 6 Recognize the efforts of CRIMARIO II to promote effective information sharing in the region. Signatory States using IORIS recognize its utility as a communication platform.

Signatory States of the Djibouti Code of Conduct convened a meeting of the DCoC/JA National Focal Points on 29 November 2024.

The highlights of the National Focal Point Meeting included:

1 Meeting Agenda and Key Proposals:

- .1 The Meeting reiterated the need to implement the Cape Town Resolutions
- .2 The Meeting agreed on the need to expedite the operationalization of the National Maritime Information Sharing Centres (NMISCs)
- .3 The Secretariat was requested to update the matrix to capture the latest information on NMISC status and capacity building gaps and to coordinate with partners as appropriate.
- .4 IMO was requested to follow up with the United Republic of Tanzania on providing technical assistance on maritime security governance.

2 Capacity building for maritime security governance

The Secretariat was requested to follow up with Member States to obtain updates on the progress made in the establishment of National Maritime Security Committees (NMSCs), National Maritime Security Risk Registers (NMSRRs), and National Maritime Security Strategies (NMSSs), as well as to identify capacity-building gaps and the support needed.

3 Amendments to Steering Committee and Working Groups TORs and handover procedures.



- .1 The mandate of incoming Chairs of the DCoC and its WGs will commence on 1st January. The period from elections to 31 December will be for transition
- .2 The title “Chair of Steering Committee” will be renamed “Chair of the DCoC” and likewise for the [Deputy]Co] Chair.
- .3 TORs for the governance structures to be updated including the annexes.
- .4 The Chair and Co-Chair of WG3 and Deputy to be included in the SC.

4 **Emerging Threats and Regional Challenges:**

Participants raised concerns about the growing threats in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and western Indian Ocean, and agreed to highlight and keep these areas of concern in focus while making efforts to find regional solutions to mitigate them. They highlighted the need to expedite the operationalization of the Regional Information Sharing Network (ISN) to enhance awareness of threats and boost response capabilities.

5 **Assessment of Maritime Centres:**

- .1 IMO was requested to provide technical assistance in conducting capability assessments of the centres, identifying capability gaps, exploring benchmarking opportunities, and sharing best practices in collaboration with well-established centres.
- .2 The meeting noted that Comoros has already made the necessary arrangements to establish its NMISC including having a presidential decree and appointing a director to manage it. Mauritius has also established its National Centre.
- .3 Gaps in equipment, personnel, and infrastructure in existing centres were identified as challenges.

6 **Vessels of Interest (VOI) Database:**

The Meeting agreed on the need to develop a regionally-owned VOI database to track suspicious maritime activity.

7 **Establishment of WG3**

- .1 The Meeting agreed on the need to establish Working Group 3 on Operational Cooperation and Coordination at Sea and adopted the related resolution.
- .2 The Meeting requested the Secretariat to organize a workshop to discuss the startup of WG3, draft TORs, agree Chair and Co-Chair, and invite NFPs, representatives of navies and coast guards from DCoC States as appropriate, NMISCs, regional ISCs, and international naval partners, subject to availability of resources.



8 Regional Maritime Security Strategy (RMSS):

- .1 The Meeting agreed on the need to sustain momentum in developing the RMSS and to complete the work prior to the next HLM.
- .2 The Meeting agreed that the RMSS should include the role of Working Group 3 on Operational Cooperation and Coordination at Sea.

9 Proposed Projects and Funding:

- .1 The Meeting noted that the EU Crisis Response Project aims to provide equipment, assessments, and training for NMISCs, with capacity building for Djibouti and Yemen Coastguards as key beneficiaries.
- .2 The Meeting also noted that IMO had submitted a proposal to Denmark for support to Somalia and Kenya.

10 Concerns on Engagement:

The Meeting agreed on the need to address maritime security threats throughout the region including the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and the wider Western Indian Ocean. It was important to leave no country behind. Any concerns in this regard should to be communicated to partners.

11 Next Steps:

- .1 Finalize and circulate a communiqué on WG3 to member States.
- .2 Expedite operational coordination through RCOC and enhance collaboration with regional navies and maritime law enforcement agencies.
- .3 Address gaps identified during centre assessments and align future projects with national priorities.

Results of the Friends of the DCoC Meeting

In its parallel meeting, the Friends of the DCOC made a number of recommendations on how to make the DCOC Capacity Building Matrix a more effective tool for matching regional States needs with development partners' assistance programmes.

Friends of the DCOC proposed some technical improvements to the matrix itself, development of protocols on confidentiality and sharing of information contained in the matrix, and its use as a real-time instrument to monitor and track progress.

The Friends of the DCOC also considered how to enhance information sharing, capability development, capacity building, and operational coordination; as well as taking stock of ongoing



activities, programmes and opportunities in the region. The establishment of a third working group on operational coordination at sea and the need to focus on the “legal finish” were also discussed.

Next Meeting

The Meeting welcomed the offer by [*****] to host the next High-Level Meeting and invited offers from the Friends of the DCoC to co-sponsor the event. The next Plenary session will take place in [*****] 2025 but meetings by the Steering Committee, Working Group 1 and Working Group 2 will continue to be held in line with the DCoC protocols for meetings.
