

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

Dar es Salaam, 28-30 November 2024

Day 2: Giovanni Cremonini, (Act.) DHOD EEAS Secdepol.6,

Presentation: “EU Support for The Implementation of the DCOC-JA”

- Your Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- It is an honour for me to present to the DCOC-JA High Level Meeting the EU support for the Implementation of the DCOC-JA.
- I will continue from where Ambassador Christine Grau ended yesterday and give you a more complete overview of the different elements of the European Union’s contribution to the DCOC-JA – what we call the “integrated approach”. Above all, we aim always to work in a coordinated way between EU institutions and our Member States, in which we call the “Team Europe” approach.
- We all know how strategically important the Western Indian Ocean is due to energy deliveries and as a maritime trade hub. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is at the centre of global commerce: nearly 100,000 ships transit the ocean annually, with 30 per cent of global containerized cargo, while 42 per cent of global crude oil, product and distillate is lifted from and within the region. As for the EU, over 40% of the EU trade with Asia flows through the Western Indian Ocean.
- But the maritime security situation in the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea, and the Western Indian Ocean has become increasingly complex due to geopolitical conflicts, illegal activities, and serious threats to the safety and security of navigation. In particular, the Red Sea has witnessed escalating security threats, largely due to the Houthi attacks on commercial vessels. Between November 2023 and August 2024, more than 130 ships were attacked in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.
- The crisis has also disrupted regional security and led to a reemergence of piracy off the coast of Somalia. According to the IMO, 13 piracy attacks occurred or were attempted in the Indian Ocean, and 7 took place in the Arabian Sea between January and June 2024.
- The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden are vital shipping lanes upon which the global economy depends. Any threat to shipping transiting this area is not only a threat to regional economies but also to the wider global economy and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The Houthi strikes on maritime traffic in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have forced maritime industry to reroute their maritime traffic to go around Africa. Maritime traffic through the Red Sea has declined by 71%, while the transit through the Suez Canal has declined by over 60%. The rerouting has led to significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions, costs, and disruption to global supply chains.
- The growing insecurity has severely impacted regional states in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden, which already face multifaceted and dynamic maritime security threats such as piracy, armed robbery, IUU fishing, illicit trafficking, oil theft and bunkering, environmental degradation, and human smuggling and trafficking.
- Other terrorist organizations might potentially adopt tactics similar to that of the Houthis. Furthermore, the conflicts on land and at sea create favorable conditions for maritime crime, and thus require maritime security enforcers to be vigilant.

- Your Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- As Ambassador Grau outlined yesterday, the EU has adopted several important regional strategies - for the Horn of Africa (May 21), for the Indo-Pacific, which includes the NW Indian Ocean (September 21) and for the Gulf (May 22). Our EU Maritime Security Strategy was updated only one year ago. The common goal of these strategies is to create the conditions for mutually beneficial partnership and cooperation with our regional partners to promote security and stability in these important regions.
- The revised EU Maritime Security Strategy also places great emphasis on Maritime Domain Awareness and on the protection of critical maritime infrastructure, especially sub-merged data cables. Over 99% of Asia-EU data flows through those sub-merged cables running through the Strait of Bab al-Mandab, and the Red Sea.
- Maritime security threats are often ocean wide and are always regional. Thus, the response should be regional and preferably, also ocean wide. The EU sees itself as a smart maritime security enabler, supporting regional maritime security actors to enhance their maritime security capabilities to address threats and challenges in their own neighborhood and support sustainable development of the marine environment, while being ready to ensure freedom of navigation if needed.
- In the Western Indian Ocean, the Djibouti Code of Conduct – Jeddah Agreement is the only regional maritime security organisation which covers the entire region. The EU was very pleased to become a “Friend” of that framework in April 2024. The EU supports the Djibouti Code of Conduct –Jeddah Amendment (DCOC-JA) to reach its objective of establishing a regional maritime security architecture, and to counter regionally all maritime crime, illicit trafficking, and unreported/ unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- As Ambassador Grau said yesterday, as a regional organisation itself, the European Union is convinced of the necessity of regional cooperation to address common challenges. In this region, cooperation and information exchange is essential to provide to all regional states a clear picture of what is happening in the maritime environment – an essential first step to being able to respond and take action. The DCOC-JA offers a framework in which this cooperation and exchange can take place, and the EU is ready to support you in taking forward this important work.
- From our side, we are working hard to ensure that our contributions, from EU institutions and our Member States, are joined up and coherent – what we call on our side, the “integrated approach”. To support us in coordinating our engagement, the EU in 2019 established a new concept, called Coordinated Maritime Presences (CMP), to improve the coordination of EU maritime presences in a specific region.
- With the Coordinated Maritime Presences, we seek to optimize existing naval, air and space assets deployed by EU Member States, while looking for synergies with current EU Commission capacity building programs, as well as with regional and international actors. By doing so, the EU aims to support the building up of a regional security architecture in the Indian Ocean. It is important to underline that the CMP is not a naval operation; there is no operational headquarters. It is a very light touch voluntary coordination mechanism between EU Member States to allow us to make better use of our existing assets.
- But the Coordinated Maritime Presences concept is not only about the coordination of European naval assets. It is part of the EU’s overall contribution to regional cooperation – essential for sustainable security in the maritime domain.
- Our objective is to ensure a coherent and consistent support to the DCOC-JA and its signatory states in pursuing a safe, secure and sustainable maritime environment. The EU has many instruments already deployed in this region – from our CSDP missions and operations on land in Somalia and Mozambique and at sea in the NWIO, to capacity

building initiatives led by the European Commission, to our diplomatic engagement through EU Special Representatives for the Gulf and the Horn of Africa. And of course, our network of EU Delegations provides the essential focus for our engagement with you, our partners, both bilaterally and on a regional basis.

- Your Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- As you have already heard, the EU annually contributes 80-90 million euros to support regional maritime security structures in the Western Indian Ocean, including both initiatives financed by the European Commission and the budgets of our CSDP missions and operations. We work closely with and through other organisations in the region, such as the Indian Ocean Commission, UNODC, INTERPOL, and IMO to support your regional efforts to build-up regional maritime security architecture. As always, our approach is to work through partnerships and with other regional actors – both to find synergies and coherence in our engagement, but also to invest in the relationships and networks that are essential underpinnings to successful regional cooperation.
- Our focus on supporting the DCOC-JA regional maritime security architecture is at the centre of this engagement and it is closely aligned with the DCOC-JA's 8-point programme. I could mention in particular here support for the DCOC Information Sharing Network, selected coast guards, and the DCOC regional training programme. We are ready to continue to work with the DCOC-JA secretariat and its signatory states to identify further areas for cooperation.
- This morning, my colleague Giulia Nicoloso, spoke about some of the important EU initiatives in the region. Through the Red Sea programme; the Port Security and Safety of Navigation programme; and Safe Seas Africa-Western Indian Ocean programme; the EU is providing substantial concrete support to partners and to regional structures.
- Our naval operations, Operation ATALANTA and Operation ASPIDES, are a tangible contribution to maintaining open sea lanes – to addressing piracy and to safeguarding maritime traffic and the lives of seafarers. Through our civilian and military missions and operations, we provide training and capacity building support directly to the navies and coastguards of partner countries. A safe and secure maritime domain is an essential prerequisite for the sustainable economic development of maritime resources for coastal states.
- Yesterday you also heard from Martin Cauchi-Inglott, who presented the CRIMARIO II project which provides tools for maritime information and operations coordination. CRIMARIO has successfully provided the IORIS platform and associated training throughout the Indo-Pacific region, from the east coast of Africa to the west coast of Latin America. CRIMARIO's objective is to strengthen maritime security and safety and to a smaller extent also to address sustainable fisheries, by enhancing inter-agency cooperation and coordination, at the national and regional levels.
- The IORIS platform is in use in over 100 maritime security organisations from over Indo-Pacific 45 countries. Thus, the maritime security enforcers throughout the Indo-Pacific can cooperate and coordinate their actions by using IORIS without any language barriers.
- The CRIMARIO II has actively supported the DCOC, by developing regional SOPs based on IORIS platform, and by using DCOC-JA developed SOPs for the National Maritime Information Sharing Centre's (NMISC).
- Most recently, a new initiative proposed by the European Commission will dedicate EUR 4 million to strengthen regional capacities and cooperation to address maritime threats, in response to the maritime security crisis in the Red Sea and the Western Indian Ocean. The initiative will focus on supporting the Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment to re-establish the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre in Aden, Yemen, and some

selected National Maritime Information Sharing Centres, and to support the coast guard capacities of Yemen and Djibouti, in line with the DCOC-JA's 8-point action plan.

- To this end, the action will cooperate with the International Maritime Organisation and UNODC; will seek support from CRIMARIO II; and will closely coordinate with other EU-funded maritime security actions. CRIMARIO II has already supported the establishment of the new Centre and will continue to do so.
- In addition, the EU's "European Peace Facility" is entering the Western Indian Ocean to support selected DCOC signatory countries with targeted military capacity building. The first beneficiary is expected to be Djibouti, in view of its critical role as one of the gatekeepers of the Strait of Bab al-Mandab.
- Your Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- As you have heard, the European Union has continued to invest in supporting the DCOC-JA and its signatory states with the objective of building a coherent and functioning regional maritime security architecture. We firmly believe that regional cooperation is essential to meet the objectives of securing the maritime domain – which is in the interests of everyone, from the perspectives of assuring global trade, the protection of seafarers, coastal communities and fishermen from piracy and armed criminal activity at sea, and for the sustainable economic development of the maritime environment. And now, as a "Friend" of the Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Agreement, we look forward to deepening our cooperation and engagement with our partners in this important region.
