

6<sup>th</sup> HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
JEDDAH AMENDMENT TO THE DJIBOUTI CODE OF CONDUCT

CAPE TOWN – REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

24-26 OCTOBER 2023

08h30-09h45: Opening Ceremonies (RCA, IMO, EU statement)

Honourable Minister Chikunga

Distinguished Delegates,

Very honored to be represent the European Union on behalf of the EU Ambassador to South Africa, who would have liked to be here today. And allow me to also convey our congratulations to the Republic of South Africa for hosting and organizing this important High-Level meeting in beautiful Cape Town.

The EU has always supported the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Jeddah Amendment and I am pleased to be with all of you today to underline our continued commitment to take this important work forward.

Maritime security has become a major challenge in this increasing competitive world. The EU has a strong interest in keeping commercial routes open, in ensuring safe and lawful use of maritime natural resources, fighting organized crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism and in collaboration to protect against new threats.

The European Union is determined to become a key maritime security provider. Indeed, since 2021, we have adopted important regional strategies - for the Horn of Africa (May 21), for the Indo-Pacific (September 21) and for the Gulf (May 22).

One common goal of these strategies is to create the conditions for a two-way street cooperation with our regional partners to promote security and stability in these important regions.

The Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment is a major achievement of this regional maritime security cooperation.

What I want to underline is the importance of coherence and inclusiveness of all initiatives. To contribute to this objective, the EU in 2019 established a new concept, called Coordinated Maritime Presences (CMP), to improve the coordination of 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.

The Gulf of Guinea was the first designated EU maritime area of interest, followed by the North Western Indian Ocean (launched in February 2022)

But the Coordinated Maritime Presences concept is not only about the coordination of naval assets. This is part of the EU's overall contribution to regional cooperation – essential for sustainable security in the maritime domain.

The region is facing new kinds of maritime hybrid and cyber threats. Illicit trafficking in drugs, arms and humans is becoming endemic and these criminal activities often benefit terrorist groups.

The task is immense but together we will be stronger. From the EU point of view, the Djibouti Code of Conduct and Jeddah Amendment offers one of the best avenue to establish a regional maritime security architecture.

We strongly support the international Secretariat in Kenya and we are looking to engage in specific capacity building projects.

We are pleased with your invitation for the EU to become Friends of the Djibouti Code of Conduct. We really hope that this new partnership will bring our current cooperation to a new level.

I am happy there are many other colleagues here, such as from the European Commission funded CRIMARIO II project or the EU ATALANTA operation, who will be able to share more on EU's commitment and programmes throughout the course of this meeting.

With this, wishing you good deliberations and an excellent meeting...