

**HIGH-LEVEL WORKSHOP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JEDDAH
AMENDMENT TO DJIBOUTI CODE OF CONDUCT**

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT
MR. HASSAN HOUMED IBRAHIM**

**JEDDAH ACADEMY OF MARITIME SCIENCE AND SECURITY STUDIES
JEDDAH, KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

22-24 NOVEMBER, 2022

Speech

Your Excellency, the Director-General of the Border Guard, Major General Muhammad Abdullah Al-Shehri.

Your excellences, the European Union Senior Coordinator of the Coordinated Maritime Presence in the Northwestern Indian Ocean, Ambassador Michael Pulch,

Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Heads of delegations,

Distinguished participants,

Ladies, and gentlemen

I am very pleased and honoured to be here at the opening ceremony of this high-level meeting to discuss how best to work together in dealing with maritime security challenges in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden

Let me start by thanking the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for generously sponsoring the high-level meeting

We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to the IMO and DCOC signatory states for selecting Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the venue for this meeting, having taken into consideration its strategic location and expertise in dealing with maritime matters and the leading role KSA plays in championing regional initiatives to ensure that our waters are safe and secure.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Insecurity at sea is among the modern challenges affecting the maritime industry as characterized by piracy, armed robbery, illicit fishing, drugs and human trafficking, and pollution of the marine environment, among others. Terrorism, piracy, and armed robbery against ships has particularly had adverse impact in international trade and global

security. In the past, the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden remained hot spots for armed robbery and piracy against commercial ships. Furthermore. Security and political crises witnessed by some regional countries cause increased tensions and create an environment that can be exploited by terrorist organizations to target ships and coastal installations.

More recently, we have witnessed illegal acts in the region such as direct attack on oil tankers using limpet mines, drones, and cyber-attacks, which is a major cause of concern for the region. It is therefore imperative that regional countries find ways to protect their economic interests, including oil producing areas, shipping lanes, and the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ).

As you all know, the end of UNSCR 2608 that mandated International naval Forces to patrol regional waters will now place greater responsibility on coastal states in the region to implement effective measures to address all maritime security threats. We hope that we have all learnt valuable lessons that can be effectively applied while making considerations for other forms of international interventions post UNSCR 2608. Most important is to remember that you cannot purport to be supporting the region without the full and active participation of regional countries. Under the Jeddah Amendment, the region has now come up with very good initiatives for what we can consider as regional solutions for regional problems. The Jeddah Amendment also offers very good framework for such cooperation using the Capacity Building Coordination Matrix and the DCoC Trust Fund. In this regard, we call on all the implementing partners present here, and other players genuinely interested in supporting the region to discuss with the IMO secretariat and through them the DCoC Steering committee to come up with initiatives that will bring meaningful positive change to the region through provision of technical assistance including contributions to the DCoC Trust Fund.

The DCoC and more particularly the Jeddah amendment were beneficial to Djibouti as it allowed the technical assistance to be provided to thousands of participants at the Djibouti Regional Training Centre. Let us make use of such investments among many others to move forward the DCoC Agenda.

Increased cooperation among the countries in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden will help minimize DCoC's over reliant on donor funding and political goodwill. Establishing a stronger and more local security framework will help not only reduce insecurity but also cater for the interests of the signatory states.

As you know, Information sharing is vital in dealing with security threats at sea. As one of the pillars of the DCoC, I hope that this meeting will agree modalities that will be applied in developing an effective regional information sharing network that will allow regional states to share information with one another and also with regional partners. In this regard, I would like to request our international partners to take time to understand the Jeddah Amendment because it provides a good framework of cooperation with regional States in dealing with all manner of illicit activities at sea. As regional States, we get most frustrated when international naval forces operating in the region tell us that when they catch criminals at sea, they are compelled to release the criminals after destroying the

contraband because there are no mechanisms for cooperating with regional States in ensuring that the criminals are dealt with in accordance with the law.

Be assured that regional States are willing to cooperate with you, and that the Jeddah Amendment was established with that in mind. Let us therefore take advantage of the next 3 days to come up with effective measures to operationalize the DCoC information sharing network. In this regard I appeal to you to assist regional countries in ensuring that all develop an effective multi-agency National Maritime Information Sharing Centres in line with the IMO whole of Government Approach to maritime security. This is the only way to make response to insecurity more effective and contribute immensely towards attaining Security and Growth in the region.

In addition, we call for the DCoC to consider including maritime research, industrial development, promoting education and cultural activities, establish best policies for growth of the blue economy, and weather and climate change monitoring, and green energy issues as key and emerging issues in the sector too over and above the security aspect only.

We can only succeed by standing strong together. In this regard, I would like to challenge the DCoC to find ways to strengthen the mechanism, by exploring ways to encourage more donations to the multi-donor DCoC Trust Fund, as well as to encourage other similar minded regional States such as Qatar and Bahrain to join in our efforts.

I would like to conclude by highlighting the following:

- While piracy is most visible to international partners and has been the key issue mainly addressed by the Global community, the region sees a need for the Implementing partners to also address other threats that are more harmful to our people and our economies; that is why the Jeddah Amendment is so dear to us.
- Djibouti and largely the DCoC Signatory states agree with the need to transition away from a piracy-only organization to one that now helps the region in our next steps towards building on the potential of the blue economy as we move from seeing the sea as a threat - and towards viewing the sea's potential to help improve our economies and standard of living.
- The resolutions that will be discussed here over the next 3 days lay a roadmap for regional leadership - both in information sharing to support law at sea and by developing a capacity building plan based on regional priorities which will include coordinating this assistance between the Implementing partners through the Friends of DCoC structure.
- We urge the international partners to seriously consider developing regional capacity building initiatives in coordination with the Jeddah Amendment, so as to build trust and confidence through provision of technical assistance and contributions through the DCoC Trust Fund.

Thank you for your cooperation.

