

Honorable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is an honor to address this distinguished gathering at such a pivotal moment for maritime security in our nation and region. Today, I speak to you about a vital initiative: the establishment and operationalization of a **National Maritime Information Sharing Center (NISC)**. This center will serve as the backbone for securing our maritime domain, protecting our resources, and fostering economic and social development.

The Rationale for a National Maritime Information Sharing Center

Our maritime domain is a treasure trove of resources, trade routes, and biodiversity. However, it is also a space fraught with vulnerabilities: piracy, illegal fishing, trafficking, pollution, and other maritime crimes. To safeguard these assets, **maritime situational awareness** is not a luxury; it is an imperative.

The establishment of a NISC allows us to:

1. **Know Our Maritime Environment:** By collecting and analyzing data, we can anticipate risks and threats to our maritime space before they materialize.
 2. **Promote Cooperation:** Information sharing among national stakeholders and regional partners enhances our ability to respond collectively to transnational maritime issues.
 3. **Strengthen Decision-Making:** The NISC ensures that actionable maritime information is available to the Maritime Operations Center (MOC) and other critical decision-making bodies.
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1) The Mission of the NISC

The mission of the NISC is clear and purpose-driven:

1. **Establish National Maritime Situational Awareness:** This includes real-time monitoring of our waters for vessels of interest and potential threats.
2. **Analyze and Fuse Maritime Information:** Data from various sources will be integrated to create a comprehensive maritime picture.
3. **Facilitate Information Exchange:** Across public, private, and civil society stakeholders, as well as with regional and international partners.

This mission aligns seamlessly with global legal frameworks such as **UNCLOS**, IMO conventions like **SOLAS and ISPS**, and regional instruments such as the **Djibouti Code of Conduct** and the **AIMS 2050 strategy**.

2) Organizational Structure

The NISC is not a standalone entity; it is a collaborative mechanism involving:

1. **Government Agencies:** Defense, Transport, Environment, Fisheries, and more.
2. **Private Sector and NGOs:** Those active in maritime operations and resource management.
3. **Regional and International Partners:** Ensuring alignment with shared security and economic goals.

This interagency approach ensures that all maritime actors contribute to and benefit from the center's capabilities.

3) Operational Processes and Deliverables

The NISC operates through clear and efficient processes:

- **Data Collection:** Gathering information on vessel movements, incidents, and maritime trends.
- **Fusion and Analysis:** Creating actionable intelligence from raw data.
- **Reporting:** Providing daily, weekly, and quarterly reports, including a **Recognized Maritime Picture (RMP)** and trend analyses.

Key deliverables include identifying **Vessels of Interest (VOI)**, tracking IUU fishing incidents, and responding to crises such as illegal migration or environmental disasters.

4) Success Stories and Best Practices

We need only look to similar initiatives in our region for inspiration.

- **In Seychelles**, the NISC has been instrumental in detecting and addressing IUU fishing.
- **In Madagascar**, cases such as the interception of a Kenyan-flagged vessel operated by a Sri Lankan company showcase the role of maritime information fusion in combating illegal activities. For this case, the **Kenya Joint Operation Centre (JOC)**, based in Kilindini, Mombasa, serves as a crucial hub for gathering, analyzing, and sharing maritime information to enhance operations, security, and intelligence exchange at ports of entry and exit. This multi-agency unit integrates personnel from various security agencies, trained in border management, forensic analysis, and inter-agency collaboration, to streamline processes and overcome bureaucratic barriers.

A case on **July 22, 2024**, highlights JOC's effectiveness: information from the **Regional Maritime Information Fusion Center (RMIFC)** revealed two Kenyan fishing vessels operating illegally in Madagascar's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). While one vessel escaped initial interception, the JOC, informed by the Kenyan ILO in Madagascar, successfully identified and detained the second vessel. Investigations uncovered violations, including tampering with the **Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**, operating without compliance to Kenya Fisheries Service regulations, and failing to report daily catch data. The multi-agency collaboration facilitated the vessel's penalization and subsequent prosecution.

This incident underscores the JOC's value as a central point for information coordination and operational excellence. Its ability to integrate reporting, investigation, detention, evidence collection, and prosecution demonstrates its critical role in improving maritime security and governance. The JOC model highlights the importance of centralized, multi-agency approaches in addressing complex maritime challenges efficiently and effectively.

- **CFIM Madagascar** has addressed migration incidents and supported broader regional security.

The **National Information Sharing Center (NISC) of Madagascar** played a pivotal role in managing and coordinating responses to a critical illegal migration crisis along the **Somalia-Mayotte axis** near Nosy Iranja and Bemanevika Ouest. On **November 22, 2024**, at approximately 08:00 local time, a Somali motorboat overloaded with stowaways was found drifting and towed by Malagasy fishermen to Nosy Iranja. The vessel, marked with **KMJ registration**, had departed Somalia around **November 10, 2024**, with over 30 migrants on board. Tragically, five corpses were recovered, with others lost at sea. The remaining 25 survivors, many in critical condition, were rescued and provided immediate medical

assistance by local authorities, including the **Gendarmerie Nosy Be, Health Services, Immigration Officers, and APMF.**

Later the same day, at approximately 4:00 PM, a second unmarked boat carrying Somali migrants was discovered off **Ankatafa**, in the Bemanevika Ouest district. This vessel, which had initially carried 33 passengers, had departed Somalia on **November 2, 2024**, but faced severe weather and engine failure, resulting in the deaths of 10 individuals. The remaining 23 survivors, including 22 men and 1 woman, were rescued by local fishermen and towed to Cratère port before being transferred to Nosy Be's main port.

The NISC promptly raised alerts and coordinated responses among agencies in the vicinity, ensuring a swift and organized rescue operation. In addition to coordinating locally, the **NISC shared detailed information about the incidents with the Somalia Maritime Authority**, reinforcing international cooperation to address illegal migration. This information exchange facilitated the identification of the vessels' origins and highlighted the need for strengthened surveillance and joint efforts to combat these maritime security challenges.

- By integrating real-time information sharing with Somalia, along with effective inter-agency collaboration domestically, the NISC showcased its indispensable role in addressing illegal migration and safeguarding humanitarian concerns within Madagascar's maritime domain. This event underscores the importance of a robust national maritime information system that not only protects local interests but also fosters international partnerships for enhanced maritime security.

These examples demonstrate the tangible value of such centers in addressing real-world challenges.

5) Why Now?

Ladies and Gentlemen, the need for a National Maritime Information Sharing Center has never been more urgent:

1. Our maritime threats are evolving and increasingly interconnected across borders.
2. The global community expects us to uphold international standards for maritime security and governance.
3. Most importantly, our economic prosperity depends on safe, secure, and sustainable maritime activities.

The NISC is not just a security tool—it is an engine for national development.

Call to Action

Today, I call upon this esteemed assembly to recognize the necessity of a NISC and to commit the resources, expertise, and collaboration needed to bring it to fruition. Together, we can transform our maritime challenges into opportunities and secure our nation's future as a leading maritime actor in the region.

Let us act decisively and invest in a safer, more prosperous maritime domain for our people and for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention.