



## **DCoC/JA NFPs Extraordinary Meeting No 6**

**Virtual via Teams**

**Wednesday, 5 March 2025**

### **Record of the Meeting**

1. The Signatory States of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and its Jeddah Amendment (hereinafter referred to as the DCoC/JA), along with states eligible to sign these instruments (hereinafter collectively referred to as 'Participants'), met through their National Focal Points (NFPs) to discuss and plan upcoming activities for the implementation of the DCoC/JA in 2025 and beyond. The meeting was held virtually via TEAMS on Wednesday, 5 March 2025.

2. The meeting was attended by participants from the following Signatory States:

<b>BAHRAIN</b>	<b>COMOROS</b>	<b>ETHIOPIA</b>	<b>JORDAN</b>
<b>KENYA</b>	<b>MALDIVES</b>	<b>OMAN</b>	<b>SEYCHELLES</b>
<b>SOMALIA</b>	<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	<b>KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA</b>	
<b>SUDAN</b>	<b>TANZANIA</b>	<b>UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</b>	
<b>YEMEN</b>			

And representatives from the **RMIFC** and the Secretariat.

The full list of participants is attached as **Annex A**.

#### **Aim**

3. The aim of the meeting was to set the DCoC agenda for 2025 and beyond, focusing on the implementation of the DCoC/JA. The meeting deliberated on opportunities and sought input from NFPs on other upcoming regional projects. These projects aim to enhance regional capacities to address maritime security threats in the region. The agenda is attached as **Annex B**.

#### **Welcome Remarks from the Chair-DCoC Metse Ralephenya- RSA**

4. The Chairman welcomed all participants and thanked them for their presence and unwavering dedication. He invited the recently appointed National Focal Points (NFPs) from Ethiopia, Jordan, Oman, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to introduce themselves.

5. He emphasized the need for a program of action to follow up on the resolutions and recommendations made at the last High-Level Meeting, held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 28–30 November 2024. Mr. Metse expressed gratitude to Tanzania and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for facilitating a successful high-level meeting (HLM) and the first Regional Maritime Security Strategy workshop, respectively.

6. The Chairman acknowledged the commitment of Member States to supporting the DCoC and ensuring it secures the best regional programmes and partnerships. He added that the western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden constitute a critical maritime route, hence the presence of numerous stakeholders in this space.

### **Progress on the DCoC Information Sharing Network**

7. Mr. Kiruja Micheni (IMO) noted that in recent years, the DCoC/JA has gained significant recognition—not only from international partners but also within the IMO. He stated that the presence of the IMO Secretary-General at the last HLM in Dar es Salaam, along with the prior meeting in London in October, had brought renewed focus to the IMO. This had created strong momentum that should be leveraged to build further goodwill and secure additional support. He pointed out that tangible benefits were already emerging, including discussions on new programmes.

8. He added that an important aspect, as would be highlighted by the Chairs of the Working Groups, was the development of a common Vessels of Interest (VOI) database. If successfully implemented, this database would enhance efforts to track and monitor illegal activities across the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

9. He further stated that another significant advancement was the establishment of the DCoC Working Group 3 (WG3) on Operational Cooperation and Coordination of operations at sea, which would enhance the DCoC's operational relevance. Mr. Micheni noted that in the past, the DCoC had lacked a mechanism to respond to maritime security threats and that WG3 would address this issue by enabling greater collaboration with international naval partners—such as the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR), the Indian Navy (IN), and others—with a shared interest in supporting the objectives of the Jeddah Amendment (JA).

10. He confirmed that Kenya would host the inaugural WG3 regional workshop in early May 2025, urging member states to send not only their National Focal Points (NFPs) but also key representatives from their Navy or Coast Guard, depending on which force was more relevant in their national context. While NFPs would continue overseeing coordination, the involvement of subject matter experts would enhance discussions and decision-making. Finally, Mr. Micheni mentioned that invitations would also be extended to CMF, EU NAVFOR, the US, and India, as Friends of the DCoC, to participate as supporting partners.

11. The importance of increased DCoC participation in key maritime security meetings, including SHADE and CMF meetings was highlighted arguing that regional states needed to play a more active role in articulating their security efforts, rather than leaving most activities to international naval forces with limited regional involvement.

### **Update on Proposed new projects - SSA, Crisis Response and Danish projects.**

12. Ms. Winnie Maina (IMO) built upon IMO's remarks regarding projects planned for implementation in 2025. She outlined three main projects, highlighting their funding status and objectives as follows:

- .1 The Safe Seas for Africa Project (SSA), with a budget of 1 million Euros, will be implemented in collaboration with UNODC, Interpol, and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). This three-year initiative aims to enhance intra-agency, inter-agency, and inter-regional coordination. Kenya, Mauritius, and Tanzania have been identified as beneficiaries. Deliverables include a DCoC engagement strategy to improve communication, coordination, and synergy while avoiding duplication of efforts. The project will also support the finalization of Kenya's National Maritime Security Strategy. Additionally, efforts will be made to enhance the capacity-building coordination matrix and track high-level meeting recommendations. The project will further facilitate the 2025 High-Level Meeting, aiming to adopt a framework for assessing vulnerabilities and strengthening operational coordination at sea.
- .2 The second proposed project, *Crisis Response – Red Sea and the Western Indian Ocean Project*, is an 18-month, €4.0 million initiative to be delivered in partnership with IMO, Expertise France (CRIMARIO), and UNODC. Of it, IMO will receive €1.5 million to support DCoC's work to enhance information sharing and support other maritime security initiatives. Ms. Maina noted that consultancy support would be provided for developing the Regional Maritime Security Strategy, with Saudi Arabia being considered as the host for a related workshop. Ten countries will receive technical support in conducting capability assessments of their National Maritime Information Sharing Centres (NMISCs), SOP domestication, and equipment based on their needs. Two additional workshops will be held to operationalize Working Group 3, ensuring its Terms of Reference (ToRs) are developed. Yemen will receive support in reestablishing the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre (ReMISC), thereby contributing to the growth of the regional ISN.
- .3 The third proposed project, to be funded by Denmark under the Peace and Support Programme, is still under negotiation and planned as a two-year initiative. It will focus on Kenya and Somalia, with efforts aimed at enhancing maritime security and preventing extremism. Kenya will receive support for implementing its National Maritime Security Strategy, strengthening its National Maritime Information Sharing Centre, and mentoring personnel at the RCOC through job shadowing. Somalia will receive support for ISPS Code implementation at Mogadishu Port, equipment for its Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), and mentorship through job shadowing at Kenya's MRCC. She added that these projects are designed to complement one another, avoiding duplication and ensuring that all beneficiary states progress collectively in line with high-level meeting objectives. Her briefing notes are attached as **ANNEX C**.

### **Progress Updates by Working Groups 1 on Information Sharing and Capacity Building Coordination**

13. Captain Yeslem (Yemen) informed the meeting about ongoing efforts to strengthen maritime information sharing in the DCoC region. He noted that work was underway to establish NMISCs across all participating states, ensuring both national and regional coordination through standardized Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

14. He reported that India had provided a consultant to assist in the establishment of the Mauritian NMISC. Additionally, the integration of NMISCs with MASE centres, including the RMIFC in Madagascar and the RCOG in Seychelles, had been approved. India had expressed its readiness to host the next Maritime Information Sharing Workshop (MISW), which would conclude with a tabletop exercise. India will deconflict its MISW Workshop tabletop exercises (TTX) with CRIMARIO by conducting them on the IFC software. It was reiterated that DCoC states were encouraged to propose scenarios for the exercise.

15. Providing an update on the security situation in the Red Sea, Capt. Yeslem stated that the ceasefire by Hamas had led to a reduction in attacks on shipping so far. He encouraged members to consider visiting operational NMISCs to enhance shadow training. His remarks are attached as **ANNEX D**

16. Captain Adam (Seychelles) briefed the meeting on the progress of Capacity Building Coordination within the DCoC framework. He noted that work was still ongoing to activate the seven Thematic Sub-Working Groups under Working Group 2 (WG 2) on Capacity Building Coordination. National Focal Points (NFPs) had agreed to prioritize three thematic areas, namely: IUU fishing (led by Tanzania), Port and Ship Security / Protection of Critical Coastal Installations (led by Ethiopia), and Marine Environment Protection (led by Mauritius).

17. He highlighted that the IMO Secretary-General had stressed the importance of ensuring that regionally executed projects produced clear and demonstrable outputs and that partners should recognize the need to show tangible impact at the grassroots level, beyond training sessions and meetings. He pointed out that support from the European Union (EU) through the Safe Seas for Africa project, as well as the proposed Crisis Response and Danish projects, would help build on the successes recorded under the Port Security and Red Sea projects.

18. Providing updates from the High-Level Meeting (HLM), Captain Adam stated that:

- .1 A discussion was needed on France's concerns regarding the integration of the RCOG and RMIFC within the DCoC structure, as the conditions for integration had not been fully detailed. He recalled that the decision to accept the proposal enclosed in the letter of intent sent by DCoC on 13 November 2023 had not yet been taken by the seven member states of the regional architecture.
- .2 Finally, he emphasized that France remained deeply involved in maritime security within the Indian Ocean region, both as a country within the area and as a significant naval power. His remarks are attached as **ANNEX E**.

19. Ms. Esther Njonde (IMO) gave a presentation on the enhancements to the DCoC website and the Members-Only portal, which will be financed under the SSA programme. She outlined planned upgrades for the website and the Members-Only portal, including a redesign, search engine optimization, improved content management, event registration, and upgraded web analytics. Accessibility features, such as a language translation panel for Arabic and Portuguese and an accessibility panel for users abled differently, were also highlighted.

20. Additionally, an automated feedback mechanism would be introduced, linking the website's chat function to WhatsApp for real-time engagement. The Members-Only portal would undergo restructuring to enhance capacity-building tracking, monitoring, reporting, and document support. New administrative protocols would ensure smooth transitions during leadership changes. The presentation is attached as **ANNEX F**.

## Plenary

21. Steps to re-engage Egypt, which has not participated in DCoC meetings for a long time have been initiated by the Secretariat. A visit to Egypt is planned for early this year to explore collaboration opportunities. The recently established MENA regional presence office will support this effort, though it is uncertain if Egypt will be willing to host the high-level meeting this year.
22. The detailed program for 2025 is being developed with the inception phase under the signed projects. Key meeting dates, including quarterly NFPS and Steering Committee meetings, will be shared for feedback to avoid conflicts, especially with IMO meetings.
23. Tanzania requested that the High-Level Meeting be scheduled in October to avoid overlapping with the IMO General Assembly (late November to December 4th), as some members will attend both events.
24. Mauritius informed the meeting that India is assisting Mauritius in developing its system for the National Maritime Information Sharing Centre. The project was still in its initial phase, with an Indian consultant gathering information from all relevant stakeholders. Once the data collection was complete, a suitable model for Mauritius would be developed.
25. Regarding Working Group 1 and Working Group 2, the meeting highlighted the need for further discussions with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) to clarify its position on the DCoC. It was noted that the IOC often referred to its MASE program agreement, suggestions were made for the Chair to articulate this issue further and engage with the IOC's management to define the roles of the RMIFC and RCoC within the DCoC.
26. References were made on the concerns raised by France Réunion at the High-Level Meeting (and echoed by WG2), stating that these issues must be resolved before fully integrating the two centres into the DCoC structure.

### **Summary of Deliberations**

27. Working Group 3's establishment is underway, with funding from Denmark and Kenya set to host the workshop, tentatively in early May.
28. Invitations, including NFPS and naval representatives, will be sent soon to allow for travel authorization, aiming for completion before the Regional Chief of Navies Conference in June.
29. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) will lead the strategy's development, with Saudi Arabia requested to sponsor two regional workshops.
30. Where full funding is not secured, virtual options will be considered in order to finalize the draft for approval at the high-level meeting in October/November 2025.
31. The region faces significant challenges with illegal fishing, human trafficking, and weapons and drug trafficking, yet lacks a system for continuous vessel monitoring. Efforts are underway to develop a reporting and tracking mechanism, exploring collaboration with Skylight AI to utilize artificial intelligence, satellite imaging, and AIS tracking for detecting false locations and suspicious transfers.
32. Additionally, the Revised Terms of Reference for Working Groups require updates due to changes in leadership and the Steering Committee structure, which the Secretariat will implement and publish on the website.

33. Ethiopia has expressed interest in hosting the DCoC High-Level Meeting, while efforts continue to engage Gulf countries, with Ethiopia as an alternative if no Gulf host is secured.

34. The meeting emphasized the importance of aligning Working Group 2 and the Friends of the DCoC forum's programs with the capacity-building coordination matrix. It was stated that funding proposals should be based on the CB matrix to ensure alignment with Member States' needs. The challenge of accommodating donor priorities was also recognized.

#### **Vote of thanks:**

35. The Chair expressed deep appreciation for everyone's contributions and emphasized his availability for communication and support.

36. With no further discussions, the meeting was officially adjourned at 1520 hours EAT.

#### **Annexes:**

- **Annex A- List of Participants**
- **Annex B- Agenda**
- **Annex C- Talking Points on Regional Projects**
- **Annex D - DCOC WG 1 Key Points**
- **Annex E - DCOC WG 2 Key Points**
- **Annex F - Website and Members Only Portal Upgrade - made by the Secretariat**

#### **Annex A- List of Participants**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>
1	Capt. Nayef Issa Mohammed	Bahrain
2	Anfifidine Ali Toihr	Comoros
3	Lt. Said Lavani	Comoros/RMIFC
4	Capt. Kibru Mesfin	Ethiopia
5	Capt. Getinet Abay	Ethiopia
6	Eng. Gaith Ameen	Jordan
7	Eng. Abed Aldabet	Jordan
8	Oliver Maina	Kenya
9	Ian Kanyi	Kenya
10	Capt Abdulla Latheef Mohamed	Maldives

11	Capt. Asiva Coopen	Mauritius
12	Kiran Shamloll	Mauritius
13	Kaviraj Bissessur	Mauritius
14	Said Almukhaini	Oman
15	Muhanna Moosa	Oman
16	Capt. Ibrahim Althomali	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
17	Eng. Essam M Alammari	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
18	LCDR Rayan Buhays RSN	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
19	Yonis Adan	Somalia
20	Metse Ralephenya	Republic of South Africa
21	Mashudu Nephumbada	Republic of South Africa
22	Capt Daniel Adam	Seychelles
23	Capt Islam Abudarag	Sudan
24	Stella Katondo	Tanzania
25	Mohammed Almagashi	Yemen
26	Capt Yeslem Mubark	Yemen
27	Alex Ralairivony	RMIFC Director
28	Kiruja Micheni	IMO
29	Winnie Maina	IMO
30	Esther K (Njonde)	IMO

#### **Annex B - Agenda**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-NFPs-Meeting-5-March-2025.pdf>

#### **Annex C – Talking Points on Regional Projects**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Talking-Points-NFPs-Meeting-Projects.pdf>

#### **Annex D - DCOC WG 1 Key Points**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/05032025-DCOC-WG-1-Key-Points.pdf>

#### **Annex E - DCOC WG 2 Key Points**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/05032025-DCOC-WG-2-Key-Points.pdf>

#### **Annex F - Website and Members Only Portal Upgrade - made by the Secretariat**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Website-and-Members-Only-Portal-Upgrade-made-by-the-Secretariat.pdf>

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