



## **DJIBOUTI CODE OF CONDUCT/JEDDAH AMENDMENT**

### **STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING No. 11**

**Virtual via Teams**

**Thursday 20 February 2025**

#### **Record of the Meeting**

1. A meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct, 2017 (DCoC/JA), was held virtually, via TEAMS on Thursday 20 February 2025.
2. It was chaired by Mr. Metse Ralephenya Director at Department of Transport-Republic of South Africa, and current Chairperson of the DCoC. The following attended the meeting:
  - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA- Chair of the DCoC
  - YEMEN- Chair of Working Group 1 (WG1) and SC Member
  - COMOROS – Vice Chair of Working Group 1 (WG1) and SC Member
  - SEYCHELLES– Chair of WG1 and SC Member
  - SOMALIA – Vice Chair of WG2 and SC Member
  - TANZANIA – Chair, IUU fishing thematic sub-working group

and by representatives of IMO as the Secretariat.

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

#### **Aim**

3. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the progress on the implementation of the DCoC and set the agenda for the framework for 2025 and beyond.

#### **Opening Remarks, Updates, and follow up on pending tasks. Metse Ralephenya**

4. As chair, Mr. Metse Ralephenya (South Africa) welcomed the participants and expressed gratitude for their support, emphasizing the SC's responsibility to guide the DCoC in a mutually agreed direction.
5. He thanked Tanzania for its role in supporting the HLM and ensuring its success. He urged members to expedite the operationalization of the DCoC ISN and highlighted the importance of developing a VOI database to track vessels.

6. The Secretariat was requested to update the matrix on the status of NMISCs, focusing on their capacity needs and existing gaps. A follow-up plan was deemed necessary to track member states' progress.
7. Concerns were raised regarding the growing threats in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and it was agreed that these issues should be highlighted while working towards solutions to mitigate the threats.
8. The Secretariat was tasked with organizing a workshop dedicated to formalizing Working Group 3, which would establish its Terms of Reference (TORs), as well as designate its Chair and Co-Chairs. Navies will be invited to collaborate with the DCoC on this working group, and efforts will be made to clarify the structures in each country, given that some had navies while others had coast guards.
9. It was noted that WG3 members would need to engage with international naval partners, national and regional centres, and other stakeholders.
10. Regarding the Regional Maritime Security Strategy (RMSS), participants agreed that, following the Jeddah workshop, efforts should be sustained to complete the work and present it at the DCoC HLM 2025. The WG3's role and responsibilities will be incorporated into the RMSS, as WG3 will play a significant role in operational cooperation and coordination at sea. Engagement with the RCoC was considered essential in this process.
11. The Chair called on SC members to establish delivery timeframes for the outlined activities and stressed the need to establish a Maritime Security Desk at the African Union to promote dialogue, build consensus, and support the pursuit of a common approach to maritime security challenges.

## **Agenda**

12. The meeting adopted the agenda that had been circulated in advance. The agenda is attached as **Annex B**

## **IMO-Updates from Secretariat Kiruja Micheni**

13. Mr. Kiruja Micheni (IMO) expressed his gratitude to the Steering Committee (SC) for their continued support noting that 2024 had been the most active year for the DCoC, laying a strong foundation for future initiatives.
14. He added that the Secretariat was working on identifying an institution with research and drafting capacity for the RMSS, with proposals being made to collaborate with the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a longstanding supporter of the DCoC.
10. The meeting was informed that two workshops on the RMSS development were in the pipeline with the first one focused on developing a risk register for the DCoC, discussing the structure and areas of coverage for the strategy, and drafting initial guidelines. The second would involve reviewing, editing, and proofreading the draft.
11. Due to financial constraints, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has been requested to host one of the workshops.
12. Additionally, the DCoC Engagement Strategy will be developed to enhance interactions between the DCoC and other maritime stakeholders in the region. It will outline guidelines for collaboration with other actors and seek to re-establish relations with dormant members, such as Egypt.

13. Funding for the Engagement Strategy development has been secured under the Safe Seas Programme.

14. The Secretariat has sought Denmark's support in funding the inaugural meeting of WG3, and Kenya, through the Kenya Navy and the Ministry of Transport, has agreed to host the first regional workshop in April 2025.

15. To maintain the DCoC's profile, the meeting was reminded of the necessity of ensuring SC representation in key maritime security meetings, such as SHADE and CMF, to keep its voice heard in international forums.

16. A proposal for the SC Chair to draft a letter expressing the DCoC's support for the establishment of a maritime security desk at the AU, was made to align with the goal of the Engagement Strategy. Comoros, Somalia, and Tanzania supported this proposal.

17. Mr. Lavani (Comoros) noted that while ISS publications cover a broad range of topics, they do not publish guest contributions related to DCoC regional activities. It was agreed that the Secretariat would work to rebuild its rapport with ISS through the Engagement Strategy and ensure that DCoC-related work is featured in its publications and newsletters.

#### **Update on Proposed projects i.e SSA, Crisis Response and Danish projects.**

18. Ms. Winnie Maina (IMO) briefed the meeting on the three projects proposed for implementation with the DCoC member states, highlighting their goals, duration, financial support, and deliverables. Two EU-funded projects, Safe Seas for Africa and Crisis Response, aim to enhance regional coordination and cooperation while promoting information sharing. Meanwhile, the Danish project will support Kenya and Somalia in strengthening maritime security and preventing extremism. Her briefing notes are attached as **Annex C**

#### **Working Group Updates – WG 1 with Captain Yeslem**

19. Captain Yeslem Mubark (Yemen) gave a brief on the efforts made by the working group on Information Sharing to Strengthening Maritime Information Sharing in the DCoC Region. He reported that strengthening maritime information sharing remains a top priority for the DCoC region. He emphasized that information sharing needed to be done with a goal—to support maritime operations effectively. To achieve this, efforts are underway to establish National Maritime Information Sharing Centres (NMISCs) in all participating states. These centers will enhance both national and regional coordination by operating under standardized Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). His brief is attached in **Annex D**.

20. Seychelles briefed the meeting on the progress made by Working Group 2 on Capacity Building Coordination. Efforts are ongoing to activate the seven thematic sub-working groups, with three prioritized: IUU fishing (led by Tanzania), Port and Ship Security/Protection of Critical Coastal Installations (led by Ethiopia), and Marine Environment Protection (led by Mauritius). To align these thematic areas with ongoing programs of the IMO and other agencies, subject matter leads still need to be identified. His brief is attached in **Annex E**.

21. Concerns were raised about the need for implementing partners to extend their support to all DCoC Signatory States to ensure that no country is left behind. Participants emphasized

that partners should focus on impact-based activities for the region rather than merely ticking boxes.

22. 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. India's request to rename the Capacity Building Matrix is under review, while Somalia emphasized the importance of using official work emails to ensure continuity in matrix communications amid leadership transitions. The presentation is attached as **Annex F**.

27. Comoros requested for member states' direct access to the website to share event happenings, adding the need for content management system training to DCoC members.

28. The Chair called for centralized administration of the website and subsite in terms of content and asked members to allow the Secretariat to maintain point in the backend integration to ensure quality assurance and reduce vulnerability to the systems.

### **Summary of Discussion and Way Forward**

29. Following the meeting, the SC agreed on the following as summary of discussion and way forward;

.1 The Secretariat was tasked with updating the matrix to reflect the status of the National Maritime Information Sharing Centres (NMISCs).

.2 The meeting agreed to pursue the development of a Vessels of Interest (VOI) database and the ability to track suspicious ships. Member states were urged to establish a follow-up mechanism to assess progress on their security commitments.

.3 There was a strong emphasis on promoting naval and/or coast guard collaboration under the auspices of the DCoC to enhance the effectiveness of operations at sea and deter illicit activities. WG3 will be instrumental in implementing the Regional Maritime Security Strategy (RMSS), particularly in fostering operational cooperation in maritime security.

.4 Regarding engagement with the African Union (AU), discussions centred on the need for a maritime security desk to unify regional efforts. South Africa was tasked with reviving AU engagement through direct communication, through a formal proposal.

.5 Kenya will host the inaugural regional DCoC meeting of WG3, and discussions are ongoing to schedule the date. Additionally, the importance of ensuring DCoC representation at key maritime security forums, such as SHADE and CMF, was emphasized.

.6 The meeting was updated on ongoing discussions between the IMO and Denmark to second a Senior Professional Officer (SPO) to support the work of the DCoC Secretariat in Nairobi.

.7 There is a need to determine the location for the DCoC High-Level Meeting (HLM) 2025, as funding has already been secured. The meeting agreed to prioritize states in the Gulf of Aden, given that the last two meetings took place in the WIO, with Oman, Jordan, or Bahrain as potential hosts. However, Oman and Jordan are currently unavailable, while Ethiopia has expressed interest, though no final decision has been made. It was agreed that outreach should be made to Bahrain and the Maldives as potential hosts. It was also proposed to consider hosting the DCoC HLM 2025 at the AU, aligning with efforts to establish a maritime security desk and strengthen AU engagement. This move could help secure AU support for the DCoC/JA, further integrating the region's maritime security framework into the continental security agenda.

.9 There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1603 hours EAT.

#### **Annexes:**

- Annex A- List of Participants
- Annex B- Agenda
- Annex C – Talking Points on Proposed Regional Projects
- Annex D – Progress Brief on Working Group I on Information Sharing
- Annex E – Progress Brief on Working Group II on Capacity Building Coordination
- Annex F – DCoC Website and Member Only Portal Enhancement

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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>
Metse Ralephenya	Republic of South Africa
Yeslem Mubark	Yemen
Anfifdine Ali	Comoros
Said Lavani	Comoros
Capt Daniel Adams	Seychelles
Stella Katondo	Tanzania
Yonis Adan	Somalia
Kiruja Micheni	IMO
Winnie Maina	IMO
Esther Kung'u	IMO
Mashudu Nepfumbada	Republic of South Africa (apologies)
Capt Ibrahim Althomali	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (apologies)

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

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Steering-Committee-Meeting-20-Feb-2025.pdf>

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

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/Talking-Points-on-Proposed-Regional-Projects.pdf>

#### **Annex D – Progress Brief on Working Group I On Information Sharing**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/DCOC-Steering-Committee-Meeting-WG-One-Key-Points.pdf>

**Annex E – Progress Brief on Working Group on Capacity Building Coordination**

<https://dcoc.org/wp-content/uploads/DCOC-Steering-Committee-Meeting-WG-Two-Key-Points.pdf>

**Annex F – DCoC Website and Member Only Portal Enhancement**

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

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