

# Critical Maritime Routes

- Federico Birocchi
- Pierre Cleostrate

European Commission

# I. Context

- Maritime security is crucial to European interests. Some maritime routes are vulnerable and the recent upsurge of piracy and armed robbery (+10% in 2007 and more in 2008) proves so.
- Pirates now attack ships up to 400 n.m. off shore. More violence is used.
- Hotspots of insecurity:
  - Straits of Malacca and Singapore
  - Gulf of Aden, Bab al Mandàb
  - Nigeria
  - Bangladesh

## II. European Community framework

- The **Instrument for Stability** provides the legal basis to address a number of issues as its **article 4** covers threats to law and order, the security and safety of individuals, to critical infrastructure and to public health. Issues include:
  - Terrorism
  - Organised crime including illicit trafficking of people
  - Drugs
  - Firearms and explosive materials
  - Illegal trade and transit
- Key guidelines:
  - promote trans-regional cooperation with third countries which have demonstrated their will to address these problems.
  - Emphasis on good governance, respect for international law, human rights law, international humanitarian law.

## II. European Community framework

- Support for measures to address threats to international transport, energy operations and critical infrastructure, including passenger and freight traffic and energy distribution.
- Emphasis on: trans-regional cooperation, implementation of international standards in the fields of risk awareness, vulnerability analysis, emergency preparedness, alert and consequence management.

# III. Aims of an EU Critical Maritime Routes project

- **Overall objective:**
- Contribute to increased security of international transport in some critical maritime routes and address to some extent possible related issues (organised crime, terrorism, critical infrastructure protection, export control).

# III. Critical Maritime Routes programme

- **Concentrate** on a couple of cases: the straits of **Malacca** and Singapore and Bab al Mandàb and the **Horn of Africa**.
- Coordinate with relevant **regional or international** (e.g. IMO) **initiatives** for increased regional cooperation.

# III. Critical Maritime Routes programme

- A few facts:
- **The straits of Malacca and Singapore**
  - An improving situation...
  - ...with remaining problems
  - Interesting regional cooperation initiative on safety and environmental protection
  - Cooperation Forum met last year for the first time and the Commission was invited

# **III. Critical Maritime Routes programme**

- **This cooperative mechanism consists of:**
  - **(1) A Cooperative Forum**
  - **(2a) A Project Cooperation Committee (PCC)**
  - **(2b) An Aids to Navigation Fund Committee**

# III. Critical Maritime Routes programme

- The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (**ReCAAP**)
- Enhance multilateral cooperation and address incidence of **piracy and armed robbery** among **sixteen countries in Asia**
- Three pillars: **Information Sharing, Capacity Building, and Cooperative Arrangements**

# III. Critical Maritime Routes programme

- **The Horn of Africa and Bab al Mandàb**
  - Worsening situation
  - Lack of State authorities
  - Limited resources / lack of regional cooperation
  - International force are present, since December 2008 also ESDP [operation EU NAVFOR] operation ATALANTA is deployed

# Critical maritime routes

## Indicative programme 2009/2011

- The indicative programme has been prepared with the support of a team of high level EU member States' experts (from Germany, France, Sweden and Latvia)
- Two sets of visits have been carried out between May and December 2008:
  - Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia (First round, Straits of Malacca) and
  - Djibouti, Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Horn of Africa)
  - London (International Maritime Organisation).

# Critical Maritime Routes programme

- *The Overall Objective* has been to look into the feasibility of the provision of assistance to improve transport security in important maritime choke points or dangerous routes, fight terrorism and piracy and armed robbery, better monitoring of illicit flows and better risk assessments, fight against poaching and trafficking, improved port security, export control and container security
- *The following areas of interest have been taken into account by the experts (not exhaustive)*
- *Risk management:* Develop appropriate cooperative contingency arrangements
- *Operational cooperation:* Support appropriate systems of maritime surveillance, taking into account the need for interconnection and coordination. Develop standard operating procedures for responding to threats.

# Critical Maritime Routes programme

- **Legal framework:** Support accession to and compliance with relevant conventions including the International Convention on Search and Rescue (SAR), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and the Convention for Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Marine Navigation (SUA).
- **Institution and capacity building and strengthened law enforcement:** Support relevant regional and trans-regional initiatives. Initiate the setting up of appropriate structures. Support coastguards or others providing this service. Support port and other relevant administrations in the implementation of international standards including the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code).
- **Training and research:** Improve knowledge of maritime legislation, criminal law and procedures. Develop interagency cooperation and support the networking of relevant institutions and services in the littoral states.
- **Provision of equipment:** Support the establishment and maintenance of a Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System (VTMIS) network and the enhancement of coastguard capacity in this respect.

# Critical Maritime Routes programme 2009/2011

On the basis of the experts reports, different actions could be developed under the CMR programme :

- Establish a network of regional research institutes to start an open system of information sharing on maritime safety and security matters.
- Promote the Container Traffic (ConTraffic) and Tracking System developed by JRC.
- Support the establishment of a documentation and training centre for the Horn of Africa.
- Promote the Marine Electronic Highway (MEH).
- Support Class B Automatic Identification System (AIS) Transponders on Small Ships.
- Facilitate cooperation and capacity building on hazardous and noxious substances.
- The establishment of a regional agreement on countering piracy in the Western Indian Ocean could also be considered for support at an early stage of the programme. EU know-how on issues such as maritime surveillance, satellite imagery and container trafficking control (e.g. the ConTraffic system) could be used as a model.

# The way ahead

- A validation worksop is planned for the 9th and 10th of March 2009 with representatives of EU member States and of the visited countries in order to identify the most relevant recommendations of the experts and also to take into account the outcomes of the IMO Djibouti Conference (23-26/01) and of the UK organised Sana'a Conference (10-11/2) for the future implementation