

Speech by Mr. Joël Morgan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Transport, Chairman of CGPCS, CGPCS Strategy Meeting Feb 1st 2016, Mumbai India, Taj Lands End Hotel.

Excellences, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends of the CGPCS,

We are gathered here this day in Mumbai, India, fulfilling in part the aspirations of the Contact Group membership who wanted and as expressed at the 18th Plenary Session in New York City in the United States on 8th July 2015, to add to the region by empowering further the region. This would be done in part by further engaging regional leadership within the contact group.

We are pleased therefore that Seychelles was selected and supported by the membership to assume the chairmanship for the year 2016. On behalf of the Seychelles government and the people of the Seychelles we thank you all for your trust and confidence.

In fulfillment of our obligations and our own commitment to deliver and fully support the good work to date that the CGPCS has delivered, we are gathered at the first strategy meeting of the year with another regional partner, India.

Ladies and Gentlemen before continuing on it is appropriate that we give a minute of silence to recognize the recent events that took the lives of innocent civilians at a beach side restaurant in Mogadishu, and as well those soldiers on the AMISOM mission whose service brought them to Somalia in support of a worthy and needed mission.

We recognize that even while we are making headway on the high seas as acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia further degrades, that the work of the international community will never truly be completed while the threats of instability brought about by terrorist elements on land still exists, and while the territorial waters of Somalia and the resources which it brings are not respected. Our work continues as well to ensure that all mariners currently being held by pirate gangs are returned safe and sound back to their countries of origin and to their loved ones.

It is appropriate at this time to recognize the work by those member nations and groups, who are tirelessly pursuing the safe return of those mariners. As chairman we thank you all.

When accepting the chairmanship the Seychelles made several commitments which were communicated in our 'Master Messages' to all members of the contact group. '***From the Region to the Region. Creating a lasting legacy***', was the overarching theme which confirmed to one and all what had been communicated at the last plenary session in New York.

The Seychelles Presidency during its tenure, aims to ***consolidate the achievements*** of the CGPCS into a ***lasting legacy*** of structures, capacities and mechanisms that work and that have delivered to date. The international reaction to Somali piracy started as a response to a crisis. Now we need to consolidate the achievements of the crisis response and turn them into lasting mechanisms for regional and international cooperation. Examples are: an agreed regional architecture for MSA, the continued operational coordination through SHADE and MASE.

Creating a lasting legacy means that and in part the Indian Ocean becomes a zone of opportunity for all. Another one of our Master Messages. In Seychelles we know this only too well as an island state whose very existence comes naturally because of what the oceans bring to us and how

we as custodians, care and use it. This is why within the region and world the concept of a 'Blue Economy' is so very important, nay critical to not only small island developing states, but as well littoral states and beyond.

Many young men took to sea because of poverty or the lack of economic opportunities drove them to do so. If we do not provide for jobs and economic opportunities those young men, encouraged by their surroundings and families, will continue to consider maritime piracy as an alternative.

Developing the Blue Economy aims at building the full economic potential of the sea thus creating jobs and economic opportunities. Providing jobs for those who look to piracy as a source of 'work', is what a 'Blue Economy' approach will counter if approached correctly. We are committed as a regional state, a small island developing nation, and as current chair of the Contact Group for Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, to ensure that as we work to end piracy, that we as well promote strategies that will create positive opportunities for all, in legal, environmental friendly approaches, so that our Indian Ocean becomes a positive example of what can happen when partners from all corners of this global village joins forces in a positive way. It can be done and we are doing it today. The work of the CGPCS has shown to one and all just that.

Ladies and Gentlemen this year marks the 45th anniversary of a UN General Assembly declaration that was made in December 1971, that the Indian Ocean should remain a zone of peace. At that time during the struggles of a cold war mentality, where ideologies stared down at each other, the concept was visionary and noble. As we strategize this day in historic Mumbai, let us keep this in mind, that we are here, despite perceptions and discussions that the job has been completed, that we are as yet not at the end point of our noble effort.

Recently and as of the 1st of December 2015, the HRA was reconfigured and drawn back following intense consultations by key stakeholders. Best Management Practices arose following a need to consolidate an approach so that ships of all types could safely navigate waters under threat of a pirate menace. We are now two months into the revised HRA and we know that the matter of a high risk area remains high on agendas of many and rightly so. While we convene and deliberate let us resolve to keep our focus on the end game and the 'what happens after', as piracy further erodes and risks decline.

December 1st 2015 was a milestone, the others will arrive later in the year when our partners from the EUNAVFOR and NATO missions announce their onward mission approaches as 2016 reaches its end point. Again as a group who has worked with solid determination, we must be careful in not losing what has been achieved by not having assets that can be used to effectively check and counter check any attempt by pirate gangs to reassert themselves.

The effort to date has been an all hands on deck approach to build capacity and ability within the region while improving upon sharing of information between partners. Within the region and under the auspices of the Indian Ocean Commission, regional states have increased cooperation and stepped up their engagements against piracy aggression. And within the Seychelles we note the arrival of the COI anti piracy cell and later RAPPICC, which has now become REFLECS3.

The relationships established within the contact group has as well afforded opportunities for bilateral relationships between nations to occur, and as well further establishing the role of private organizations and here I will mention Oceans Beyond Piracy and BIMCO, to name but a few, as key partners whose help and guidance has been well appreciated.

Within the REFLECS3 approach we note with satisfaction the opportunities created by having such agencies as the INTERPOL, UNODC, EUNAVFOR, working in country, providing instant connectivity through their assigned personnel.

With that said it is time to get to work, to make our time together in Mumbai well worth the effort in us all getting here and to deliver results for results are expected.

I end by thanking the Government of India and the Ministry of Shipping for hosting this meeting and to you all, members, observers for your presence this day.

I thank you for your attention.