

G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security

Lübeck, April 15

The maritime domain is a cornerstone of the livelihood of humanity, habitat, resources and transport routes for up to 90 per cent of intercontinental trade. It connects states and regions and makes otherwise distant nations neighbours. Humankind depends on a safe, sound and secure maritime domain in order to preserve peace, enhance international security and stability, feed billions of people, foster human development, generate economic growth and prosperity, secure the energy supply and preserve ecological diversity and coastal livelihoods. As the world's population grows, our reliance on the oceans as a highway for commerce and a source of food and resources will increase even more. The free and unimpeded use of the world's oceans undergirds every nation's journey into the future.

We, the Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union, are convinced that we can comprehensively counter threats to maritime security only if we follow a cooperative, rules-based cross-sector approach and coordinate our actions nationally, regionally and globally. We are persuaded that lasting maritime security can only be achieved if we join forces in order to strengthen maritime governance in pursuit of rules-based, sustainable use of seas and oceans.

We reiterate our commitment to the freedoms of navigation and overflight and other internationally lawful uses of the high seas and the exclusive economic zones as well as to the related rights and freedoms in other maritime zones, including the rights of innocent passage, transit passage and archipelagic sea lanes passage consistent with international law. We further reiterate our commitment to unimpeded lawful commerce, the safety and security of seafarers and passengers, and the conservation and sustainable use of natural and marine resources including marine biodiversity.

We are committed to maintaining a maritime order based upon the principles of international law, in particular as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We continue to observe the situation in the East and South China Seas and are concerned by any unilateral actions, such as large scale land reclamation, which change the status quo and increase tensions. We strongly oppose any attempt to assert territorial or maritime claims through the use of intimidation, coercion or force. We call on all states to pursue the peaceful management or settlement of maritime disputes in accordance with international law, including through internationally recognised legal dispute settlement mechanisms, and to fully implement any decisions rendered by the relevant courts and tribunals which are binding on them. We underline the importance of coastal states refraining from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment in areas pending final delimitation.

We firmly condemn acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, transnational organised crime and terrorism in the maritime domain, contraband trade, trafficking of human beings, smuggling of migrants, trafficking of weapons and narcotics, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, trafficking in protected species of wild fauna and flora, and other illegal maritime activities. These constitute serious and

intolerable threats to the life and wellbeing of passengers and crews on board ships, to marine biodiversity and food security, to the rule of law and to freedom of navigation and lawful trade and transport. They pose major risks to the stability and development of coastal states in areas prone to piracy and other forms of maritime crime and maritime terrorist activity. We oppose the deliberate obstruction of sea lanes aimed at interrupting trade, traffic and tourism, as well as threats against critical sea-borne infrastructure and against energy supply security in the maritime domain.

The development of standards for safe navigation, protection of the marine environment, communication, and operation of maritime shipping has long been an area of international cooperation. We call upon governments, port authorities, shipping companies, ship owners, operators, shipmasters and crews to apply and implement existing law and guidance in order to increase maritime safety and security, such as the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Guidance to ship owners, ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships. We call on ship owners, ship operators, shipmasters and crews to report any criminal act at sea immediately in order to prevent future attacks and to improve data collection.

We reaffirm our commitment to further international cooperation on combating maritime security threats. We commend the United Nations and its specialised bodies, NATO's Operations Ocean Shield and Active Endeavour and the European Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta in close collaboration with their partners, the US-led Combined Maritime Force and national contributors, as well as other initiatives such as the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea Group (FoGG) for their achievements as regards enhancing security in the maritime domain and strengthening rules-based maritime governance.

We welcome NATO's work to put its existing Alliance Maritime Strategy (AMS) into action, the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) and the corresponding Action Plan, 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy as well as the UK and US National Strategies for Maritime Security. These are all milestone documents towards a more secure global maritime domain.

We understand that the causes of maritime crime lie ashore and that crime can be exacerbated by the absence of effective, fair, accountable, and transparent governmental institutions, judicial systems and law enforcement. We reaffirm our commitment to assist in tackling existing shortcomings in this regard. In this light we salute the EU's comprehensive approach in the Horn of Africa and the EU Strategy and Action Plan on the Gulf of Guinea. We also take note of the Regional Fusion and Law Enforcement Centre for Safety and Security at Sea (REFLECS3) multinational project in the Seychelles.

We welcome and encourage research activities aimed at providing scientific and technological support to enhance maritime security, fostering information sharing and collaboration and, thus, adding to the sustainable use of the global maritime domain.

We support the incorporation of their findings into the development and implementation of maritime security policies, as appropriate.

Fostering regional cooperation, ownership and responsibility

1. We support the establishment of functioning regional mechanisms of cooperation on enhanced maritime security. National and regional ownership and responsibility are key to improving maritime security in critical areas. We particularly underline the importance of regional agreements and instruments such as the Asia-Pacific Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (“Djibouti Code of Conduct”) and the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships and Illicit Maritime Activity in West and Central Africa (“Yaoundé Code of Conduct”). We call for the acceleration of work on a comprehensive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and, in the interim, emphasise our support for the 2002 ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. We highlight the constructive role of practical confidence-building measures, such as the establishment of direct links of communication in cases of crisis and efforts to establish guiding principles and rules to govern activities, such as the ASEAN – China talks on a Code of Conduct on the South China Sea. We encourage States to do their utmost to implement their commitments, and we intend to assist them within the scope of our abilities and regional priorities. We furthermore welcome initiatives on maritime security in relevant fora, such as the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the EU-ASEAN cooperation, and regionally based Coast Guard Forums.

Enhancing capability development and capacity-building

2. We are committed to supporting comprehensive capability development and capacity-building in regions affected by piracy and other forms of maritime crime, including in ports and coastal waters, in order to enable and enhance the capacity of coastal states, regional and interregional maritime security regimes. We encourage third parties to contribute to the various multi-donor trust funds in this field, to which several G7 partners are major donors. We actively coordinate and assist capacity and capability-building measures in order to maximise their effect, as practised in the Horn of Africa through the CGPCS Working Group on Capacity Building, in Asia through ReCAAP, and in the Gulf of Guinea by the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea Group (FoGG).

Intensifying information-sharing and advancing maritime domain awareness

3. We support regional and international initiatives on information-sharing, maritime awareness and surveillance, such as the Maritime Safety and Security

Information System (MSSIS) and the EU's Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), as competent authorities' and seafarers' access to timely and accurate information about incidents and developments related to maritime security, including as regards ships' cargo, is essential for rapid and adequate response. We support regional organisations, coastal states and the shipping industry in their endeavours, such as the Maritime Trade and Information Sharing Centre – Gulf of Guinea project, to work together to collect and share information, in the pursuit of the best possible maritime situation awareness. In this regard, we encourage the creation of information-sharing and information fusion centres (ISCs and IFCs), following the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre, the Singapore IFC and the Djibouti Code of Conduct ISCs models and welcome the July 2013 Indian Ocean Commission decision to establish an information fusion centre and an operations coordination centre for the Indian Ocean. We aim to extend maritime information-sharing and surveillance beyond existing formats, within the parameters of our respective national laws and policies, with the aim of eventually creating comprehensive situational awareness of the global maritime domain.

Fighting trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants,

4. We coordinate actions nationally and internationally ashore and at sea in order to fight human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants in the maritime domain – crimes that prey on the weakest members of society and cause unimaginable hardship. We support the work of international organisations in this field. We aim to combat these crimes and address the political and socio-economic drivers of irregular migration. We underline the responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination to cooperate in order to prevent smuggling, human trafficking and forced labour, to disrupt organised criminal groups involved in these activities and to eliminate financing opportunities of such crimes. We call upon all states to ratify or accede to and implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and international instruments protecting the human rights of all persons, and support capacity building programmes to assist their implementation.

Securing the integrity of international lawful commerce

5. We encourage arrangements for information sharing and cooperation between authorities to effectively identify and address threats related to international lawful commerce. We support risk-based surveillance of goods movement in the maritime domain, consistent with international law, in the fight against terrorist and organised crime activities such as smuggling of goods, trafficking of weapons and narcotics, along with cross-border movements of proceeds of this illegal trade.

Strengthening good governance and boosting economic development

6. We help to prevent piracy and other forms of maritime crime through our work on and active commitment to good governance, functioning, capable and fair governmental institutions, and the development of civil society and of legitimate and inclusive political processes in states prone to piracy and other forms of maritime crime. We support economic development, the creation of alternative employment opportunities and the provision of basic social services in coastal states in order to enhance social and political integration and to reduce structural factors inherent in instability or conflict. We strive to address these challenges within the parameters of our respective national priorities and programmes in areas prone to piracy and other forms of maritime crime.

Spreading the rule of law

7. With a view to ensuring that the fight against piracy and other forms of maritime crime is successful, we promote functioning and efficient national judicial systems, including transparency, protection of human rights, and the effectiveness and efficiency of state and non-state bodies involved in rule of law issues, including criminal law. Perpetrators of such crimes should be brought to trial. We are concerned about weak justice systems and the lack of resolve and/or capacity in the judicial sector in many coastal states, resulting in a limited number of perpetrators facing justice. We welcome the framework for prosecuting pirates in the Horn of Africa region developed through the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, including the post-trial transfer system. We encourage efforts to follow this example in other regions as appropriate. Graft and corruption nurture illegal activities at sea. We encourage governments to address this problem more decisively and consistent with international conventions such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

Enhancing the implementation of the existing regulatory framework for the employment of private maritime security companies on board ships

8. We acknowledge the increasing role of preventive measures taken by ship and cargo owners in combating piracy aimed at improving self-protection against threats to the security of crews and vessels, including the use of private maritime security companies (PMSC) providing privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) on board sea-going vessels. We welcome flag states' and international efforts to raise the standards of conduct for PMSCs based on the IMO guidance in this field. We encourage organisations representing the interests of ship and cargo owners and maritime insurers to apply this guidance. We also encourage efforts to develop and implement standards and codes of conduct for private maritime security service providers to ensure respect for human rights in their operations in cases not covered by flag state legislation. We furthermore encourage exploring whether additional guidelines pertaining to the use of new technologies in these self-protection efforts, such as unmanned air- and seaborne vehicles, could be developed.

Promoting maritime governance to preserve coastal livelihoods and marine biodiversity

9. We intend to step up efforts to ensure the implementation of measures and regulations aimed at preventing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and conserving and managing fish stocks, such as the United Nations Agreement on the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA). We call for a global record of fishing vessels and for the implementation of IMO Assembly resolution A. 1078(28) to introduce unique identification numbers for all fishing vessels in order to improve accountability and traceability. We encourage third countries and regional and international organisations to adopt and implement policies in order to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.
10. We reiterate the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and – following the recommendations of the ad hoc open ended informal working group on biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction – expect the United Nations General Assembly to take a decision before the end of its 69th session on the development of an international instrument under UNCLOS to address this issue.

Outlook

11. We recognise that continued attention to the issue, further action at the international level, and strengthened national, regional and international political will are needed in order to enhance maritime security and the rules-based, sustainable use of the global maritime domain. In light of that, we welcome Germany's intention to host a G7 High-level Meeting on Maritime Security later this year.