

PROPOSAL FOR A STATEMENT OF IOTC ON PIRACY IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE IOTC AREA OF COMPETENCE

SUBMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Draft Statement of IOTC Plenary on piracy in the western part of the IOTC area of competence

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission "IOTC" recalls both its statements on piracy off the coast of Somalia issued in May 2008 and March 2009. Regrettably, cases of piracy against humanitarian, commercial and fishing vessels off the coast of Somalia have not declined over the last year. The Commission continues to be deeply concerned by this upsurge of acts of piracy which put at risk the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the population of Somalia and which has had a serious impact in particular on merchant shipping and also on legitimate fishing activities in the western part of the IOTC area of competence according to international laws and regulations and where their activities are monitored by IOTC members in accordance with its management measures.

The IOTC welcomes the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1814, 1816, 1838, 1846, 1851 and 1897 on piracy off the coast of Somalia and urges all States to continue and increase contributing to their rapid and effective implementation. The implementation of these resolutions helps to ensure the protection of fishermen (of various nationalities) from piracy, and enable them to carry out their fishing activities on which depend a significant amount of economic activities in Coastal countries of the Indian Ocean. The IOTC expresses its satisfaction with the ongoing efforts of organisations and states contributing to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia. It calls for the international community to devote sufficient means to fully implement the above-mentioned UNSC resolutions.

In addition the IOTC recalls the relevant provisions included in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), notably those included in its article 105, for fighting acts of piracy and calls on State parties to that Convention to take the necessary action in their national legislations to make full use of those provisions.

The IOTC also reiterates the efforts made by the International Maritime Organisation "IMO", particularly the sub-regional meeting held in January 2009 in Djibouti, where a code of conduct on maritime security, piracy and armed robbery against ships for States from the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden areas was concluded.

The IOTC calls for full implementation by all crew members and fishermen of the "best maritime practices" as agreed by the international maritime community. The IOTC reminds the importance of prompt reporting of incidents of piracy and armed robbery, including attempts, thus providing timely and accurate information on the scope of the problem. Sharing relevant information with coastal States and other States potentially affected by such incidents is crucial to addressing the issue; in this context the IOTC commends the important role of the IMO in order to enhance the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct as far as the establishment of a Training Centre in Djibouti and an Information Sharing Centre in Sana'a are concerned and the related financial support provided ~~for~~-by Japan and the European Union.

The IOTC calls on the International Community to give all its support to ensure the safety of all fishing vessels and their crew in the region from acts of piracy.