



Security Council

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Letter dated 12 August 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General; Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; and Christophe Lutundula Apala Pen'apala, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; as well as the statements delivered by Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India; Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation; Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya; Pham Minh Chinh, Prime Minister of Viet Nam; Hassoumi Massoudou, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Niger; Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America; Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France; Eva-Maria Liimets, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia; Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway; Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Camillo Gonsalves, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; and Eamon Ryan, Minister for Transport and Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications of Ireland, as well as by the representatives of China and Tunisia, in connection with the videoconference on “Maintenance of international peace and security: maritime security” convened on Monday, 9 August 2021.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for this videoconference, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are also enclosed: Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, the European Union, Fiji, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council ([S/2020/372](#)), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, these briefing and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) T.S. Tirumurti
President of the Security Council



Annex I

Remarks by the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I thank India for using its presidency to shine a light on a vital and complex issue – maritime security, and how we, as a global community, can and must work together to strengthen it.

This Council has been increasingly focused on this issue over the last decade.

Today's debate is a chance to build on this important effort.

Threats related to maritime security affect people in every country in the world – coastal and landlocked alike.

We all depend on the world's oceans and seas – not only for the air we breathe, for regulating our planet's atmosphere and for their astounding biodiversity, but for their wealth of natural resources and for transportation and trade.

For more than three billion people – the vast majority in developing countries – this issue takes on a special urgency.

They count on the oceans and seas for their daily social and cultural life – and for their livelihoods.

Yet maritime security is being undermined at alarming levels.

From challenges around contested boundaries and navigation routes that do not conform to international law, to the depletion of natural resources – including illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing to armed attacks and crimes at sea, such as piracy, robbery, and terrorist acts.

In fact, the first half of 2020 saw a nearly 20 per cent increase in reported acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships worldwide over the previous year.

This was despite an overall decrease in the volume of maritime traffic due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

In Asia, such incidents nearly doubled.

West Africa, the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, and the South China Sea were most affected by piracy and armed robbery against ships.

The unprecedented levels of insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea are particularly concerning.

Maritime insecurity is also compounding the terrorist threat emerging from the Sahel.

These growing and interlinked threats call for a truly global and integrated response: a response that addresses these challenges and their root causes – including poverty, a lack of alternative livelihoods, insecurity and weak governance structures – in the immediate term.

And a response that brings together everyone with a stake in our maritime spaces, from governments and regional groups to shipping companies and the fishing and extraction industries, to those charged with keeping our maritime spaces secure from threats like piracy, robberies and terrorism, as well as transnational crime, including drug trafficking and the smuggling of migrants, and, always, to the people living in coastal communities who count on the ocean for their livelihoods and well-being.

The good news is that we already have an international legal regime for maritime security, underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Convention and related instruments strike a careful balance between States' sovereign rights, jurisdiction and freedoms, and their duties and obligations.

But this framework is only as strong as countries' commitment to its full and effective implementation.

We need to translate commitment into action.

As the Secretary-General has said repeatedly, all States must live up to their obligations. And they must resolve any differences in relation to maritime security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

We welcome the concerted steps taken by the Security Council and Member States so far to strengthen international and regional cooperation on maritime security, and to do so in accordance with all related instruments – including the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

And we support many regional initiatives that are gathering partners around maritime security across the globe, from fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia to ending armed robbery against ships in Asia, to tackling the growing insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, to our work with the African Union and Arab States to strengthen security in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, to the Secretary-General's Special Representatives and Envoys, who are working shoulder-to-shoulder with their national, regional and international counterparts to end maritime crime and piracy and peacefully settle competing claims.

Partners are coming together like never before to strengthen maritime security.

By lending your voice and support to these initiatives, this Council can draw increased attention and action to these efforts.

Finally, our global response must include working with those people most affected by maritime security challenges.

Across the United Nations family, we are working with impoverished coastal communities to develop new opportunities for decent and sustainable work, through technical assistance and capacity-building.

We need to reduce the likelihood that desperate people will turn to crime and other activities that threaten maritime security and degrade our ocean environment.

And we need to make sure that our oceans and seas can continue to thrive and can support humanity's economic, social, cultural and environmental development for generations to come.

Throughout our work, we need to ensure that our response recognizes the clear link between security and sustainability. For without security, the sustainable and responsible development of the oceans and its resources is impossible.

We cannot afford to squander the future of this wondrous natural gift nor the futures of the billions of people who rely on it.

Given the clear links between global security and our maritime spaces, we welcome efforts to further galvanize support for action.

We look forward to working with this Council, and with communities and partners like India, to unlock the full potential of sustainable, peaceful and secure oceans and seas for us all.

Annex II

Briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Ghada Fathi Waly

I am grateful for the high-level attention and comprehensive approach that India is bringing to this urgent priority. I am also thankful for the strong support shown for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the presidential statement on behalf of the Security Council.

India has demonstrated its steadfast commitment to enhancing maritime security, including through the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. With 80 per cent of global trade carried by sea, and with major shipping routes along the Indian Ocean, such cooperative responses to maritime crime are essential.

I also welcome the African Union's continued focus on this issue, including through the Lomé Charter.

All countries, both coastal and landlocked, rely on the security of the world's oceans. Freedom of navigation, confirmed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, is recognized as a fundamental principle of international law.

This time-honoured freedom has come under increasing threat from piracy and armed robbery, terrorism, drug trafficking and trafficking in nuclear materials and firearms, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants, illegal activities in the fisheries sector, waste trafficking, and intentional and unlawful damage to the marine environment: all represent acute challenges to global efforts to maintain international peace and security and to keep the world's oceans accessible and safe for seafarers and for shipping.

Climate change and marine pollution are adversely affecting billions of people, including 9.4 million fishers and two million seafarers. Hardship will leave more people vulnerable to crime and exploitation.

As commercial air travel decreased and land border controls increased in 2020 owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, illicit drug trafficking on maritime and waterway routes accelerated in Europe, Latin America, North Africa and South-East Asia.

According to the 2021 UNODC World Drug Report, record shipments of cocaine were seized in European ports during the pandemic. Preliminary data from 12 countries indicate that quantities seized in seaports were up 18 per cent last year.

As the Secretary-General's report on oceans and the law of the sea highlighted, oceans also serve as transit areas for some 99 per cent of the world's Internet traffic. During the COVID-19 crisis, usage increased by up to 50 per cent.

This network of submarine cables represents a critical vulnerability, with some smaller island States relying on a single cable connection.

Piracy and armed robbery at sea continued to be a major threat during the pandemic. The lives of seafarers remain at risk, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea, where some 90 per cent of kidnapping incidents have occurred.

A new UNODC study has found that pirate operations in the Gulf of Guinea are becoming more sophisticated. Some six pirate groups, with 30 to 50 members each, have developed the capacity to conduct attacks in deeper waters, and they are mostly targeting international vessels to kidnap crew members for ransom.

The overall combined income resulting from the attacks has been estimated at some \$4 million per year. The economic impact, however, has been estimated to be in the range of \$800 million.

The first half of 2020 saw a 20 per cent increase in incidents of piracy and armed robbery directed against ships, compared with the same period in 2019.

Security needs, changes in routes, additional fuel, increased insurance, and other costs are estimated to be in the billions of dollars, with an obvious negative impact on global trade.

The need to tackle piracy and organized crime at sea has been increasingly recognized by the Council and by Member States.

UNODC has supported Member States to address transnational challenges to maritime security for more than a decade.

Our Global Maritime Crime Programme began in 2009 with a budget of \$300,000 to address the threat of Somali piracy. It has since expanded into our largest programme with a budget of over \$230 million, providing capacity-building and support for legal reform, simulated trials, maritime training centres and more.

This assistance is provided by some 170 personnel based in 26 Member States, who work in teams focusing on the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Yet the challenges to maritime security continue to grow, and our responses must keep pace.

To secure our seas, we need greater concerted international efforts to target challenges and reduce vulnerabilities.

With this in mind, I very much welcome the holistic and comprehensive approach of this debate, and I encourage the Security Council members to build on this momentum and translate it into action. And here, I would like to highlight four areas of action for consideration by the Council: implementing the international legal framework; building capabilities; expanding partnerships; and promoting holistic crime prevention responses.

Allow me to elaborate on these four points.

First, we need more effective implementation of the international legal framework and Security Council resolutions promoting maritime security.

This includes Security Council resolution [2551 \(2020\)](#), which gives UNODC a leading role in supporting States to disrupt the trafficking of illicit and licit goods into and out of Somalia and to curb the provision of components for improvised explosive devices intended for Al-Shabaab.

The framework governing the use of the oceans and their resources is further reinforced by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols addressing human trafficking, migrant smuggling and illicit firearms.

The Convention applies at sea as well as on land, and it has been strengthened with a new review mechanism.

Alongside the Organized Crime Convention, UNODC also supports Member States to implement the global counter-terrorism instruments, the international drug control conventions and the Convention against Corruption.

Taken together, these instruments provide a solid basis for international cooperation against transnational maritime crime and terrorism, and we need to support all Member States to make effective use of this framework.

Second, we need greater political will and more resources for technical assistance and capacity-building to do this. We need to enact domestic legislation as well as to enable cross-border law enforcement and criminal justice cooperation to share intelligence and to investigate and prosecute crimes at sea.

UNODC works in coordination with United Nations entities, regional organizations and other partners to provide assistance to address the full range of maritime crime, including illicit trade supporting and financing terrorists; the smuggling of migrants at sea and forced labour onboard fishing vessels; drug trafficking; piracy and armed robbery at sea; and other threats.

Our support, coupled with sustained political will and donor commitment, is starting to yield results.

Not a single suspect had ever been convicted of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea until last month, when both Nigeria and Togo issued their first maritime piracy convictions.

Both countries have worked to strengthen criminal justice capacities in close cooperation with UNODC and other partners, including to draft and revise legislation and to build the capacities of prosecutors and judges.

Third, we need to keep strengthening international and regional cooperation, as well as public-private partnerships, to counter the expansion of maritime crime.

UNODC continues to operationalize cooperation through platforms including the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime, the Southern Route Partnership, the Caribbean Forum on Maritime Crime and the Maritime Law Enforcement Dialogues in Southeast Asia.

I would also like to note the work of UNODC with India through the information fusion centre for the Indian Ocean Region in New Delhi.

UNODC supports the Yaoundé maritime safety and security architecture, and we are providing experts to the Interregional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa.

Our cooperation is also helping to tackle shared challenges of marine pollution in the Indian Ocean, and UNODC is working with States to develop national resilience frameworks to protect critical maritime infrastructure such as submarine cables.

Public-private partnerships are essential to all of these efforts.

UNODC works closely with the International Maritime Organization, INTERPOL, regional organizations, shipping operators, lawyers and insurers, as well as private security companies, submarine cable operators and seafarer organizations, to increase maritime domain awareness and improve law enforcement responses.

Harnessing advanced technologies and data is a key opportunity and priority for UNODC across our mandate areas, and we are helping Member States to leverage technology in the fight against maritime crime, including through the provision of satellite imagery, radar systems and maritime domain awareness infrastructure.

Fourth and finally, I would like to highlight the need to tackle root causes and support all countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as part of integrated crime prevention responses, most of all for affected coastal communities.

The private sector can be our partner in these endeavours.

Major shipping companies issued a declaration in May 2021 on the suppression of piracy, which also highlighted the importance of capacity-building and information-sharing.

Pirates, criminals and terrorists exploit poverty and desperation to seek recruits, gain support and find shelter. To counter these threats, we need to raise awareness and educate people, especially young people, while providing alternative livelihoods and support for local businesses.

We know that there can be no security without development, and no development without security, on land or at sea.

Now, the global pandemic has exposed many fragilities and vulnerabilities of our societies and economies, and this is no less true of the maritime domain.

To recover better and promote prosperity, we need to strengthen cooperation and capabilities. We must combat immediate threats to maritime security while building local capacities and empowering coastal communities to manage the problem sustainably in the long term. This requires meaningful investment, commitments and political will.

Working together, we can keep our seas safe and free from crime.

Annex III**Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Christophe Lutundula Apala Pen'apala, speaking on behalf of the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi**

[Original: French]

It is with great pleasure that, in my capacity as current Chair of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union for 2021–2022, I am participating in this debate convened by India on the topic “Enhancing maritime security: a case for international cooperation”.

I will thus take the opportunity to commend India and its Government, represented here by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and to congratulate him for this welcome initiative under his mandate as President of the Security Council for August 2021.

According to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), maritime transport is both the most international of all the world’s major industries, and unfortunately, among the most dangerous. Consequently, the most effective, and furthermore, the best way to enhance security at sea is to develop international regulations respected by all nations. For this basic reason among others, IMO was established in 1959. It should be noted, however, that other guidance, including the conclusion of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on 10 December 1982, also helped to mark the way towards achieving maritime security.

It is important to specify that, in the maritime domain under examination, security procedures use codes that can contradict the old universal principle of “freedom of the seas”, that is, the principle defining the sea as a territory open to all and belonging exclusively to no one. These security procedures thus concern not only public or private maritime and coastal spaces, but also zones lying in international waters.

In the expectation of optimal maritime security, it is useful and pragmatic to address some of the causes of spectacular accidents at sea, mainly: lack of appropriate equipment, lack of adequate education and training for on-board personnel, excessive speed, navigation of unsafe “floating dustbins”, failure to respect the normal height of container ships and the dangers of containers falling overboard, which cause significant and regrettable marine pollution with unpredictable and harmful effects.

I am thoroughly convinced that international cooperation is the most appropriate means to guarantee maritime security. In our understanding, this cooperation, in order to be effective and efficient, must be driven by regional dynamics, which would constitute the first link in the chain of efforts deployed at the international level.

To that end, in October 2016 the member States of the African Union adopted that African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa, commonly known as the Lome Charter. This important instrument for securing African maritime spaces implies the recognition that no country by itself can prevent maritime threats or sustainably develop its own maritime domain. Therefore, the Lome Charter calls on the signatory States and partners to work together in the areas of training, education, trade and industry.

It is important to note that over 90 per cent of world trade takes place on the sea. The prosperity of Africa should be linked to its oceans and seas, for over two thirds of its area is covered by water. Indeed, on this continent there are 38 coastal or

island countries, and 52 among the hundreds of its port facilities can profitably handle several containers and various types of merchandise.

On the contrary, African ships, which make up close to 1.2 per cent of global maritime transport in number and 0.9 per cent of gross tonnage, see their ports handle only 6 per cent of global cargo traffic and close to 3 per cent of global container traffic. We must admit that in this specific area, improvements are needed to fundamentally change the situation, given that the African maritime domain offers all its nations major growth potential and a significant network of maritime routes, both for their security and their prosperity. In Africa, this domain is thus highly important in terms of natural and energy resources, trade and industry, scientific inquiry and leisure. However, it must be recognized that progress cannot be fully realized unless we manage to resolve the insecurity ravaging our main maritime zones such as the Gulf of Guinea and the Somali Basin, constituting a threat which is of concern to the African Union and the rest of the international community.

In the Gulf of Guinea, there have been many deplorable acts of piracy, armed robbery and banditry. The same deplorable situation exists off the Somali Basin in the Indian Ocean, thus mobilizing the international community to secure maritime traffic. Several States have deployed units to achieve this objective in support of the efforts of coastal States, in particular the suppression of acts of maritime piracy.

I think it useful to specify that the threats and vulnerabilities identified in the African maritime spaces are: first of all, transnational organized crimes including money-laundering, illegal trafficking in arms and drugs, acts of armed piracy and robbery, illegal bunkering or theft of crude oil along the coasts of Africa, maritime terrorism, human trafficking and clandestine immigration by sea. Further, there are illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, overfishing and ecological crimes, for instance deliberate sinking of vessels and oil spills, leading to toxic waste. To this must be added natural disasters, environmental degradation, climate change and strategic communications contributing to cybercrime.

Allow me to return to the Lome Charter, and to inform you that its particular objective is to prevent and suppress national and transnational crimes including terrorism, piracy, armed robbery, drug trafficking, trafficking in migrants, trafficking in persons and related illegal trafficking of all kinds, as well as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. It also aims to promote and reinforce cooperation among African countries, with a singular aim to raise awareness of the maritime domain.

Our topic for today “Enhancing maritime security: a case for international cooperation” falls precisely under this heading. You will thus easily understand that the ambition of the Lome Charter is, within the framework of the African Union and its peace and security architecture, to prevent, manage and eradicate threats to maritime security on the continent, by enhancing the coordination of coastal, island and landlocked African States.

I invite you to support this dynamic regional cooperation that should lead to an inclusive approach to maritime security. Our continent needs the support of the international community and the United Nations in that area. The collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information, as well as the exchange of reliable information have proven to be necessary and vital. The African Union welcomes the strengthening of cooperation and collaboration between the regional economic communities and the various commissions, primarily the Gulf of Guinea Commission, which has recently concluded a protocol with the African Union on maritime security.

As you have certainly understood, this type of cooperation will allow us to better address the maritime security challenges facing Africa, including the drastic lack of appropriate surveillance technology to cover its vast geography. The dearest wish of

Africans is therefore to see the establishment of a vast interconnected system between governments and the private sector in order to promote the dissemination of information for greater awareness on social interfaces of the importance of maritime security.

It is within this framework that the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) was developed, which was conceived as a tool to address the maritime challenges facing Africa in the area of sustainable development and competitiveness. Through the seas, oceans and interior waters of Africa, this integrated maritime strategy is intended to promote the creation of more wealth by putting into place a prosperous maritime economy, profiting to the greatest extent possible from the potential of maritime activities, in such a way that environmental sustainability is preserved.

It goes without saying that the preservation of the marine environment of Africa is essential for the improvement of its gross domestic product, regional and global trade, competitiveness, long-term growth and employment. Consequently, the plan of action accompanying this strategy highlights the defined objectives and related activities, results, time frames and executing agents. These objectives include the possible establishment of new institutions and structures, wealth creation and human resource development, as well as activities to build capacity for good maritime governance.

To conclude, I remain convinced that the enhancement of maritime security will depend mainly on the way in which the following essential issues are addressed: the environment, public health, the economy, risks related to the sea and its dangers, risks to people and lastly, the prevention of risks to ships, crisis management, rescue at sea and international cooperation.

At this level, it should be noted that some member States of our organization are highly advanced in maritime security and already possess protocols in this sector. We must draw further inspiration from them, in order to protect seamen, our coastal populations and our economies. Therefore, it would be advisable to encourage and raise awareness among all States of the adherence to existing legal instruments and mechanisms on international maritime traffic, maritime security and the peaceful settlement of disputes. They must be addressed urgently.

Annex IV

Statement by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi

The ocean is our joint heritage. Our sea routes are the lifeline of international trade. And the biggest thing is that these oceans are very important for the future of our planet. But today, our shared maritime heritage is facing many challenges. Sea routes are being misused for piracy and terrorism. There are maritime disputes between many countries. And climate change and natural disasters are also maritime domain-related issues. In this broad context, we must make a framework of mutual understanding and cooperation for the preservation and use of our common maritime heritage. No country can make such a framework alone. It can only be realized through a common effort. It is with this thought that we have brought this important issue before the Security Council. I am confident that today's high-level discussion will guide the world on the issue of maritime security.

I would like to place before you five basic principles to structure this brainstorming.

First principle: we must remove barriers from legitimate maritime trade. The prosperity of all of us depends on the active flow of maritime trade. The hurdles could be a challenge for the entire global economy. Free maritime trade has been associated with the civilization of India since time immemorial. Thousands of years ago, the Lothal port of the Indus valley civilization was linked to maritime trade. It was in the independent maritime environment of ancient times that the message of peace of Lord Buddha spread to the world. In today's context, India has defined the vision of security and growth for all in the region on the basis of this open and inclusive ethos. Through this vision, we want to create an inclusive structure for maritime security in our region. This vision is of a safe, secure and stable maritime domain. Free maritime trade also requires that we fully respect the rights of each other's sailors.

Second principle: the settlement of maritime disputes must be peaceful and based on international law only. This is very important for mutual trust and confidence. It is only through this principle that we can ensure global peace and stability. With this understanding and maturity, India has resolved its maritime boundary with its neighbouring country, Bangladesh.

Third principle: we must face natural disasters and maritime threats created by non-State actors together. India has initiated several steps to enhance regional cooperation on this subject. We have been the first responder in maritime disasters related to cyclones, tsunamis and pollution. The Indian Navy has been patrolling the Indian Ocean since 2008 to prevent piracy. India's White Shipping Information Fusion Centre is increasing shared maritime domain awareness in our region. We have provided training in hydrographic survey support and maritime security to many countries. India's role in the Indian Ocean has been as a net security provider.

Fourth principle: we have to preserve the maritime environment and maritime resources. As we know, the oceans have a direct impact on the climate. And therefore, we have to keep our maritime environment free from pollution like plastics and oil spills, and take joint steps against overfishing and marine poaching. At the same time, we must also increase cooperation on ocean science. India has launched an ambitious "deep ocean mission". We have also taken several initiatives to encourage sustainable fishing.

Fifth principle: we must encourage responsible maritime connectivity. It is clear that infrastructure creation is necessary to increase maritime trade. But the physical sustainability and absorption capacity of the countries have to be kept in mind in the development of such infrastructure projects. For this, we must make proper global norms and standards.

I am sure, on the basis of these five principles, that a global road map of maritime security cooperation can be formed. The high level of and active participation in today's open debate shows that the subject is important for all members of the Security Council.

Annex V**Statement by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin**

[Original: Russian]

I would like to thank the Prime Minister, as the current President of the United Nations Security Council, for initiating this session of the Council to discuss such a significant and sensitive issue, namely, modern challenges and threats to maritime security. This initiative is in line with the constructive role that India has traditionally played in the international arena by helping to develop multidimensional, mutually beneficial and equal cooperation.

Seas and oceans have always brought together people and civilizations. Unfortunately, sea lanes also face many threats. Therefore, it is so crucial that today we are reviewing meaningful and practical matters related to the fight against “piracy in the twenty-first century” with the intention of more efficiently countering transnational crime and preventing the use of seas and oceans for criminal purposes.

As the Prime Minister rightfully mentioned in his statement, in order to achieve tangible success on this track we need to bring together the efforts of all stakeholder States, international organizations and regional structures – with a central coordinating role for the United Nations and its Security Council.

As I have said many times before, and today as I address the members of the Security Council, I would like to underscore once again that Russia advocates strict adherence to the key norms and principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, such as respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and the settling of disputes through dialogue.

I hope that the participants in our debates will agree with me that United Nations principles must also be applied to the peaceful and responsible use of maritime spaces and their natural resources, and to protection of the marine environment and sustainable economic activity in the vast global ocean.

As a leading maritime power, Russia is doing a great deal to maintain and strengthen the international rule of law in maritime security. Our country is proactively engaged in work on a whole range of these issues within the United Nations and in multiple regional formats, including in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum for security and at East Asia summits.

Russia also wants to build productive cooperation with the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Indian Ocean Commission.

We are also naturally seeking to help ensure security in the area of the Persian Gulf, in the Atlantic Ocean and in the Gulf of Guinea, where we have seen a growing number of maritime robberies and hostage-taking.

The specific situation is aggravated by the fact that some countries do indeed have difficulty in combating transnational crime syndicates, pirates and terrorists on their own. That is why we are discussing the issue of uniting, under the aegis of the United Nations, the force potential of the special services and relevant armed contingents of all interested States.

Russia is prepared to share its experience of counter-terrorist operations, crime prevention and the identification and neutralization of criminal gangs, including those operating in maritime areas.

We believe that it would be useful to regularly share experience and best practices of countering piracy, armed robberies and other maritime criminal activities.

In this context, we could think about establishing a special body within the United Nations system that would directly deal with the issue of combating maritime crime in various regions. This body would rely on support from United Nations Member States and actively engage experts, representatives of civil society, academia and even the private sector. We hope that our partners will consider Russia's proposal in a constructive manner.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Russian Federation is committed to our joint goal of combating maritime crime in all its forms and manifestations. We stand ready to continue to support the development of equal international cooperation in this area.

Once again, I would like to thank our Indian friends for their useful initiative of holding this meeting and I would like to wish India continued success this month during its presidency of the United Nations Security Council.

Annex VI

Statement by the President of the Republic of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta

We must value a resource to protect it. The maritime domain, and the related blue economy, is one such precious resource.

We depend on the maritime domain for food security, navigation for international trade, and tourism and ecological heritage, among other essential aspects, for our citizens' livelihoods.

However, the maritime domain is inadvertently a field prone to insecurity that affects coastal nations and the stability of entire regions. Piracy, narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling and other transnational threats all thrive in maritime space, undercutting government authority and investor confidence.

Cognizant of the development potential of maritime domain, Kenya has and continues to champion environmental-friendly and sustainable exploitation of the Blue Economy.

It is in this context that, in November 2018, together with Canada and Japan, we hosted the first-ever global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in Nairobi, attracting delegates from 184 countries.

The Conference dedicated a session to maritime security, recognizing that a secure maritime domain is an enabler of seaborne trade, jobs and wealth creation.

Kenya therefore welcomes this debate as a continuing conversation on the subject and the Council's contribution to the attainment of the aspirations of the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference.

Kenya is an Indian Ocean rim State. This means that we are part of a region that brings together countries from three continents, with different sizes and economic strengths and a wide diversity of languages and cultures.

Today, when we look at the greater Indian Ocean rim, we see a vibrant grouping that has recorded and sustained the fastest economic growth in human history.

We are, however, alive to the threats in the rim, which deserve much more multilateral cooperation and multinational attention if we hope to sustain the economic progress achieved so far.

Piracy remains a threat to shipping. In the Straits of Malacca, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, criminal networks are active in piracy, in the illicit trafficking of persons, firearms and narcotics and in illegal fishing.

In addition, competition and meddling for influence and resources in the region by extraregional powers has intensified. Unless addressed with nuance, this will continue undermining the security of the coastal States and the maritime domain and, indeed, the livelihoods of millions of people.

On this confluence of opportunity and threat, allow me to underscore the following action points that I recommend to the Security Council and the international community.

(i) First is that we need to better coordinate existing maritime security strategies and mediation mechanisms. This we can do by strengthening the international legal regime and institutions at the forefront of addressing maritime insecurity;

(ii) Second, geopolitical rivalries that manifest in insecurity in the maritime domain must be limited. Competition between established and rising powers leaves

us all worse off. Instead, we need strengthened emphasis on observing international law and resisting the lure of promoting proxy rivalries in the pursuit of narrow interests.

(iii) Third is our understanding that threats to the maritime security such as terrorism, piracy and robbery at sea are predominantly a factor of land-based instability, meaning that secure maritime routes and economic zones depend on helping to develop more capable and legitimate States that are able to resolve domestic and regional challenges.

(iv) Fourth is that international cooperation should prioritize the equipping and training of effective national coast guards. A properly contextualized regional and subregional approach is the way to go.

(v) Last but not least is a reminder that rising sea levels and extreme weather conditions, courtesy of climate change, threaten the existence of some small island States and coastal populations. Therefore, successful global climate change adaptation and mitigation are key to the security of these States.

Let me, in closing my remarks, encourage more thinking and innovation to be devoted to developing ambitious free- and fair-trade regimes in areas such as the Indian Ocean rim. I am confident that this can deliver economic prosperity to a large proportion of the world poorest and, therefore, greatly change the world for the better.

Annex VII

Statement by the Prime Minister of Viet Nam, Pham Minh Chinh

Thank you very much for taking the initiative and hosting the first-ever Security Council open debate on enhancing maritime security. Even when the world is devoting much resource to the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the topic of our discussion is of strategic and practical significance.

Viet Nam especially commends and echoes India's five-S approach at the Security Council. Viet Nam is committed to working with India and other Council members in promoting dialogue, cooperation and mutual respect for global peace and prosperity.

Oceans and seas provide an immense resource for humankind. They also serve as the lifeline of international trade and as the gateway connecting countries and continents.

Recognizing the importance of oceans and seas, nations have created important cooperation mechanisms, both bilateral and multilateral, at the regional and global levels. Most remarkably, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 has truly become the constitution of oceans and seas, the universal and unified legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and the basis for international cooperation to address common challenges.

Nevertheless, at sea, we are faced with both traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Terrorism and criminal acts, especially organized crime, have been expanding in scope and complexity. Climate change, sea level rise and the pollution of the marine environment, especially by plastic debris and the degradation of the marine ecosystem, have caused serious and long-term consequences. Violations of international law, and even threats or uses of force, have escalated tensions and affected peace, friendship, security, safety and the freedom of navigation and trade, as well as efforts to address non-traditional security challenges.

Therefore, preserving and enhancing maritime security is in the common interest and has become an urgent task and shared responsibility of the entire international community.

As a littoral State, Viet Nam comprehends profoundly the immense value of the sea as well as the challenges to maritime security. Viet Nam is implementing a strategy for the sustainable development of the marine economy, which aims to utilize marine resources in a sustainable and responsible manner to contribute to the country's overall development. The strategy also aims to enhance Viet Nam's law enforcement capacity, ensuring the effective settlement of maritime issues and safeguarding the sovereignty, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and other legitimate interests of Viet Nam over its maritime zones.

Viet Nam persistently pursues a foreign policy of peace, independence, self-reliance, multilateralization and diversification of international relations, as a trusted friend and partner and a reliable member of the international community. Viet Nam stands ready to cooperate, exchange information and share experiences with other countries in efforts to address maritime security issues and to contribute positively to the maintenance of a peaceful and secured maritime environment and to sustainable development in the region and the world.

In that connection, I would like to make the following proposals.

First, it is imperative that States and international organizations develop a comprehensive, extensive and profound awareness of the importance of oceans and

seas and of the threats to maritime security. Such awareness shall form the basis for greater responsibility and political will to strengthen confidence and develop more cohesive and effective cooperation arrangements in order to preserve and utilize oceans and seas in a sustainable manner and to safeguard a peaceful and stable maritime environment. Resources should be made available for the implementation of national strategies and regulations to meet this end.

Second, maritime security is a global issue and therefore requires global solutions. We need to take a comprehensive approach based on cooperation, dialogue and international law and to forge stronger cooperation through bilateral and multilateral channels and at the regional, interregional and global levels to effectively address maritime security challenges.

Viet Nam proposes the development of a network of arrangements and initiatives for regional maritime security, with the United Nations working as the coordinator, to bolster information- and experience-sharing, coordinate actions and address common challenges in a timely manner.

Viet Nam values and actively takes part in initiatives and mechanisms in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and between ASEAN and its partners for practical cooperation in the South China Sea. They provide forums for dialogue and confidence-building and help to coordinate maritime security cooperation efforts.

Viet Nam is determined to work with ASEAN and China to seriously, fully and effectively implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea of 2002 and to negotiate an effective and substantive code of conduct of parties in the South China Sea that is consistent with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In addition, Viet Nam calls upon all countries and multilateral institutions, especially United Nations agencies, to step up assistance and pay due attention to the hardships and interests of developing countries.

Third, the policies, regulations and conduct of States at sea must be in line with international law, especially the Charter of the United Nations and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. States shall fully uphold their legal obligations under the Convention, respect the rights, interests and legitimate economic activities of relevant States, settle disputes through peaceful means in line with international law, respect diplomatic and legal processes and ensure the freedom, safety and security of navigation and overflight, without resorting to acts that would complicate the situation or create tension.

It is my strong belief and fervent hope that the Security Council will uphold its primary role and responsibility in maintaining international peace and security and continue to make important and concrete contributions to enhancing maritime security.

Viet Nam stands ready to make greater contributions to promoting dialogue and building confidence and to join the international community in maintaining security at sea and realizing the ocean's enormous potential, for a future of peace and prosperity for all humankind.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Niger, Hassoumi Massoudou

[Original: French]

I would first of all like to congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the accession of India to the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. You are taking on this distinguished responsibility on behalf of your great country, which is always in the forefront of contributions to common efforts for international peace and security. You can count on the Niger, which will spare no effort to facilitate your mission.

I would also like to welcome the opportunity you have provided us to debate a topic that is of particular importance to international peace and security: maritime security. Indeed, no part of the world is spared the consequences of maritime piracy, which is continually expanding and dangerously compromises maritime freedom of circulation and the security necessary for shipment of goods and other merchandise that allows international trade to flourish.

I would like to thank Mr. Felix Antoine Tshisekedi, Chairperson of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, for his contribution to this debate. We know that maritime security is also a matter of great concern to the African continent. You will recall that the African Union held an Extraordinary Summit from 10 to 15 October 2016 at Lome, at which the African Union Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa was adopted.

Lastly, I would like to thank Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, and Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their introductory briefings.

The seas and oceans represent over two thirds of the surface of our planet. Billions of people depend on them for their livelihoods. Furthermore, the seas and oceans represent, in one way or another, a major sector of the global economy. Today, over 90 per cent of global commercial trade is conducted in the maritime space. They are not only strategic zones of passage, but also important areas for fishing or extraction of hydrocarbons or other minerals.

That is why we believe that this question above all others calls for enhanced cooperation and better management of the resulting prosperity. Therefore, we have the urgent duty of safeguarding maritime security, which is an important guarantee of international peace and development.

Maritime security, as we know, remains precarious despite our unceasing efforts to preserve it. Indeed, the proliferation and sophistication of criminal acts in the marine environment have become an ongoing threat to international peace and security. These acts have a disastrous effect on economic activity and feed into illegal financial flows of countries affected by this phenomenon. They also undermine prospects for development.

The African continent pays a heavy price for these criminal acts committed at sea. While during the 2000s the Somali coast and the Gulf of Aden were the epicentre of hijacking of merchant ships, maritime insecurity has expanded to the point where, a decade later, it has reached the Gulf of Guinea. In this region, piracy, especially in the petroleum industry, hostage-taking for ransom and trafficking in drugs and human beings, to name just a few, have become current practices.

The Niger, a landlocked country whose closest port of entry is over 1,000 km from its capital, Niamey, has felt the full force of the impact of any deterioration in the security climate on its neighbours' shores; their ports serve as a transit point for its international trade. This often results in shortages of all kinds, affecting the prices of basic goods, with serious social repercussions.

Therefore, as it did in the Gulf of Aden, the international community should pay particular attention to maritime piracy, in particular by reinforcing the means to combat this phenomenon in the Gulf of Guinea. It is appropriate here to commend the efforts at the national level by the littoral countries of the Zone, as well as the valuable support provided by UNODC, to bring an end to this scourge.

In closing I would like to make some recommendations that could help to strengthen maritime security, as it exists today:

- The first is political. Just as we have strongly encouraged as part of the fight against terrorism and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, we must consolidate our cooperation by promoting its multilateral and global dimension, spearheaded by the United Nations. Going forward we can rely on existing regional and subregional mechanisms such as the Yaounde Architecture for Maritime Security and Safety established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, and the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy for Africa 2050.
- My second recommendation is legal. We should ensure that we have a common definition of maritime security, encompassing the vast array of crimes perpetrated in the marine environment. This prerequisite will thus allow us to harmonize our penal codes and bring those who commit offences to justice. The arrest and trial of some who have committed acts of piracy, thanks to judicial cooperation among States, has undoubtedly contributed to a reduction in such crimes.
- Lastly, for my third recommendation, I would like to invite partners to invest more in development projects and initiatives in order to create more opportunities for youth in the countries or regions most in the grip of the scourge of maritime insecurity.

Annex IX

Statement by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Antony J. Blinken

When I last had the chance to address the Council back in May, it was to underscore the importance of defending, upholding and revitalizing the rules-based international order grounded in the Charter of the United Nations. Few issues are more crucial to that endeavour than the future of our ocean. The ocean not only covers 70 per cent of the Earth and accounts for 97 per cent of its water, but it is crucial to the livelihoods of our peoples and the sustainability of our planet. Maritime safety and security are enduring interests of all nations (interruption).

Freedom of navigation and overflight and the unimpeded flow of lawful maritime commerce are also critical to the security and prosperity of nations and to global stability. The international community has long benefited from a rules-based maritime order where international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, sets out the legal framework for all activities in the ocean and seas.

But despite having a clear body of international law that we have all committed to abide by and uphold, despite all the ways in which freedom of the seas, open waterways, and the unimpeded flow of lawful maritime commerce have delivered for nations and peoples around the world, and despite the indispensable role that this maritime order has played in fostering economic activity, security cooperation, scientific innovation and environmental sustainability – despite all of that, the order is under serious threat.

That is why I am grateful for India's leadership in bringing us together today and calling on all nations to recommit to defending and strengthening the maritime rules and principles that we forged together and committed to uphold.

Let me just speak, if I could, specifically to some of the critical areas where we see maritime rules and principles under threat.

In the South China Sea, we have seen dangerous encounters between vessels at sea and provocative actions to advance unlawful maritime claims. The United States has made clear its concerns regarding actions that intimidate and bully other States from lawfully accessing their maritime resources. And we and other countries, including South China Sea claimants, have protested such behaviour and unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea.

Five years ago, an arbitral tribunal constituted under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 delivered a unanimous and legally binding decision to the parties before firmly rejecting unlawful, expansive South China Sea maritime claims as being inconsistent with international law. The United States has consistently called for all countries to conform their maritime claims to the international law of the sea as reflected in the Convention.

This is in keeping with the peaceful resolution of disputes and the sovereign equality of Member States, which are core principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Efforts to resolve maritime disputes through threat or use of force flout these principles.

Some may assert that resolving the dispute in the South China Sea is not the business of the United States or any other country that is not a claimant to the islands and waters. But it is the business and, even more, the responsibility of every Member State to defend the rules that we have all agreed to follow and to peacefully resolve maritime disputes. Conflict in the South China Sea or in any ocean would have serious

global consequences for security and for commerce. What is more, when a State faces no consequences for ignoring these rules, it fuels greater impunity and instability everywhere.

States are also provocatively and unlawfully advancing their interests in the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea. On 29 July 2021, the *Mercer Street*, a commercial ship that was peacefully transiting international waters in the north Arabian Sea, was attacked using explosive unmanned aerial vehicles, resulting in the deaths of two people. Upon review of the available information, we are confident that Iran conducted this unjustified attack, which is part of a pattern of attacks and other provocative behaviour. These actions threaten freedom of navigation through this crucial waterway, international shipping and commerce, and the lives of people on the vessels involved.

On behalf of the United States, I reiterate my condolences to the families of the victims and to the United Kingdom and Romania. It is on all of our nations to hold accountable those responsible. Failing to do so will only fuel their sense of impunity and embolden others inclined to disregard the maritime order.

In the Black Sea, the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov, we see continued aggressive actions against Ukraine with dangerous incursions on the sea and in the air and the harassment of vessels, which are disrupting commerce and energy access. We reaffirm our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters. Crimea is Ukraine.

When nations ignore or purport to redraw the borders of other nations, whether by land or by sea, they undermine the sovereign equality of Member States, a guiding principle of the United Nations.

Non-State actors also pose a serious risk to maritime safety and security, from pirates and illicit maritime traffickers in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean to pirates and armed robbers in the Gulf of Guinea and drug traffickers in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean. Yet our collective response to these actors shows how effective we can be when we work together to defend maritime order and hold accountable those who violate it.

We see that, in the African-led Yaoundé architecture for maritime safety and security, which was supported by the Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, and in the Nigerian-led Deep Blue Project and maritime collaborative forum. We see it in India's maritime fusion centre, which has enhanced cooperation among Indian Ocean partners, and in the widespread ratification by countries of the Caribbean Basin of the Agreement concerning Cooperation in Suppressing Illicit Maritime and Air Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in the Caribbean Area.

We see it in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, which has demonstrated significant success in building an effective regional response, most notably in law enforcement. The United States led the creation of this group, and we remain active in its work and in coordinating naval operations to prevent a resurgence of piracy in the area. We are grateful to fellow Security Council members for supporting annual resolutions to help coordinate and strengthen these efforts.

We must bring the same coordinated and comprehensive responses to other threats to maritime safety and security. These include illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which undermines the sustainability of fish stocks, circumvents agreed conservation and management measures and violates the sovereign rights of coastal States, and often goes hand in hand with the use of forced labour and other illicit activities. It also includes responding to environmental disasters, like in the cooperation between Sri Lanka, the United States and other countries to mitigate the impact of the merchant vessel *X-Press Pearl* catastrophe.

All of these activities require that we share information and coordinate our responses, that we help to build the capacity of our maritime partners and that we engage with affected communities, industry and non-governmental organizations, which are critically important allies in this effort.

Together, our nations have spent decades building this maritime order and the broader rules-based international system of which it is a part. We have done so out of a shared recognition that it benefits all our nations and all our peoples when Governments accept certain constraints on their actions rather than living in a world where the strong do what they can and where those who are less powerful feel coerced and threatened.

That has never been more true than it is today, and it makes the collective effort to defend, strengthen and build upon this order more urgent than ever.

Annex X**Statement by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian**

[Original: French]

I would first like to thank the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, for allowing us to discuss the important subject of maritime security here in the Security Council Chamber today. I also wish India a good and fruitful Presidency of the Security Council.

The sea, our common good, is unfortunately subjected to predatory behaviour, crime and increasing pollution that affect its ecosystem as well as the millions of people who depend on it.

Of even greater concern is the will of some States to turn the maritime domain into an arena of strategic competition, as in outer space or cyberspace, which is growing day by day.

Maritime security is a major test of multilateralism and calls for increased mobilization by the international community. On that subject, I would like to stress three points.

First of all, I would like to remind you that above all, maritime security depends on respect for international law.

The seas should not be a place of conflict among States. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea establishes the legal framework governing all activities conducted on the oceans and seas. And no State should derogate from it.

France remains fully committed to freedom of navigation in compliance with its international obligations. “Freedom of navigation” does not mean “freedom of action” or “impunity”. Without respect for common norms, the seas would become an area of constant confrontation.

We are thus firmly committed to reducing tensions and risks in the Arabian-Persian Gulf, through the maritime surveillance mission in the Strait of Hormuz conducted by eight European countries. And in that regard, along with our European and Group of Seven (G7) partners, we have strongly condemned the attack targeted against the vessel *Mercer Street* on 29 July 2021, which led to the death of two of its crew members. The Security Council raised this issue at its meeting of Friday, 6 August. The international community must be extremely vigilant and continue its efforts to ensure respect for freedom of navigation in the region. And I remind you that to that end, for nearly two years, Europe has been making significant efforts to strengthen maritime surveillance and security in the Gulf.

We are also highly attentive to the situation in all zones where the law of the sea and freedom of navigation are called into question, as is the case in the South China Sea, the Black Sea or the Eastern Mediterranean.

Secondly, the seas are the scene for new threats that we must face together, through cooperation.

It has been said that we must counter piracy, terrorist acts at sea, organized crime, drug trafficking and wildlife trafficking constituting environmental crimes. The international community must provide the necessary means to combat these attacks and criminal activities, both in waters under the jurisdiction of States and on the high seas.

France participates in various regional forums to assist its partners in this way. I am thinking in particular of the membership of France in the Indian Ocean Rim

Association. In addition, since 20 May it will chair the Indian Ocean Commission, which is a key actor in maritime security and safety in the region, for one year.

France is also becoming more involved in the Pacific. As a maritime island state in the region, our country intends to contribute to the Indo-Pacific strategic framework it has just adopted on the national level. It wishes to continue to promote an inclusive space, based on law and multilateralism.

The Indo-Pacific region is a priority for France and the European Union. That is why we have supported, and obtained, the development of a European Union strategy for the Indo-Pacific. It will be one of the priorities of the French presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2022.

We are also pleased that it has been possible to conduct pilot operations in the Gulf of Guinea, with a capacity-building component for third parties. And among examples of good regional cooperation, I would like to highlight the Yaounde Architecture and activities undertaken with the support of the Group of G7 Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++). For over 30 years, France has played a part in combating piracy in the region with the Corymbe mission.

We are also combating threats at sea through the European Union with Operation IRINI in the Mediterranean and Operation Atalanta, which has significantly reduced piracy off the coast of Somalia.

The work of the United Nations in this area is clearly essential. I welcome the mobilization of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which oversees the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, known as the Palermo Convention. I especially welcome the joint work between UNODC and the European Union to develop a global programme on maritime crime and a container control programme.

Lastly, I would like to highlight the environmental dimension and its connection to security.

We must indeed protect the sea and oceans from the damage they suffer.

The ocean is our common good. We all, both individually and collectively, have a responsibility to protect it and use it sustainably. Promoting the development of a sustainable blue economy, protecting the coral reefs, and supporting marine biodiversity including by combating overfishing and marine pollution, are the challenges we must face.

Ensuring maritime security also means regulating traffic in order to limit the pollution of marine areas. And this is the meaning of the conference of parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution (Convention of Barcelona), under which the European Union and the 21 coastal States of the Mediterranean have agreed to make the Mediterranean a zone of low sulfur oxide emissions from ships.

However, the protection of maritime areas cannot be achieved by local actors alone. The international community has a central role to play, particularly through the negotiations under way at the United Nations for the protection of biodiversity on the high seas.

Mr. President, once again I would like to thank India for allowing the Security Council to play its role on all maritime issues. And rest assured that France will remain strongly committed along with its partners to strengthen maritime security and defend the common goods represented by our maritime spaces.

Annex XI**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia,
Eva-Maria Liimets**

Let me start by stating the obvious – the seas and oceans cover more than 70 per cent of the planet. This percentage illustrates how important it is to work on issues related to maritime security. The ongoing pandemic has once again proved the important role of maritime transport in global trade and in the delivery of critical supplies. International maritime security has to ensure the free and peaceful use of the seas and oceans by all nations. Unfortunately, seas and oceans are often used for engaging in illegal and destabilizing activities.

Today, threats to maritime security like piracy and terrorism, as well as indirect threats arising from illegal fishing and climate change, are transnational and interconnected. Estonia is deeply concerned about the continuing incidents in the Persian Gulf that threaten freedom of navigation, international trade and people's lives.

Increasing global digitalization poses new challenges. As dependence on data grows, cybersecurity in maritime issues becomes a true challenge. In the light of the spread and misuse of emerging technologies, Estonia emphasizes the need to enhance cybersecurity across maritime sectors and increase resilience against cyberattacks. Maritime cybersecurity has become a pressing concern – cyberattacks targeting port or shipping operations have already occurred. Cybercrime has reached the maritime sector by causing problems and delays in port terminals and causing the loss of revenues.

Climate change has a negative impact on marine and coastal environments and the well-being of populations. Considering that the ocean is the main climate regulator, the international community needs to increase efforts to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its Goal 14, and better connect the policies pertaining to green and blue economies.

Maritime security is very multifaceted and is affected by, among other factors, territorial disputes, armed conflicts and transnational organized crime. In order to prevent and eliminate transnational organized crime in maritime settings, further coordination and cooperation across all relevant States and sectors is needed. Capacity-building of vulnerable States and timely and accurate information-sharing is the key. We thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for its work in this field.

Estonia would like to highlight the contribution of the European Union to maritime security through its maritime operations. We welcome the extension of the mandate of Operation Atalanta of the European Union Naval Force to combat piracy in the Indian Ocean and the renewal of the authorizations to inspect vessels in the central Mediterranean to prevent violations of the United Nations arms embargo on Libya. Currently, Operation IRINI of the European Union is the only initiative under this mandate.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remains the central and essential framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. Our adherence to the entirety of the Convention is crucial. It signals our commitment to upholding international law, promoting a rules-based order and settling disputes amicably.

Finally, I take this opportunity to urge greater cooperation between States and different agencies in order to prevent and mitigate threats to maritime security and to do so fully in line with international law.

Annex XII

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway, Ine Eriksen Søreide

The ocean is of vital importance to Norway. It is central to our history, our livelihood and our development. Safeguarding the security of our seafarers and protecting the health of the ocean – governed by the law of the sea – are cornerstones of Norway's foreign policy.

We depend on the oceans for much of what sustains us as human beings, and in her address to the General Assembly last year, Prime Minister Solberg underlined that 80 per cent of the world's trade, including food, medical equipment and energy products, is transported by ship. That is why the disruption of maritime lines of supply has the potential to threaten both the world economy and global security. The oceans are key to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals, yet they are becoming warmer and more acidic.

This is harmful to all of us.

We very often talk about the seven seas or the five oceans. That should not obscure the fact that there is only one ocean: one ocean of seemingly boundless resources that all nations depend on, but one that is facing a range of threats, notably piracy.

But there are also other considerable threats, and like many of my colleagues, I also condemn the attack on the merchant vessel *Mercer Street* off the coast of Oman and would like to express Norway's condolences to Romania and the United Kingdom for the loss of the lives of their citizens. Recurring attacks on vessels in the region are a threat to maritime security and are deeply worrying.

I would like to commend India for bringing maritime security to the agenda of the Security Council, because piracy is a global threat. It is a threat to the security of seafarers, to international trade and development and to international peace and security.

The Gulf of Guinea has emerged as a hotbed of piracy. In 2020, there were 135 kidnappings for ransom at sea. Some 130 of these took place in the Gulf of Guinea. Attacks are becoming more brutal, and they take place further offshore. There have been positive developments since the adoption of Security Council resolution [2018 \(2011\)](#). States have signed the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, a regional operational framework has been put in place and investments have been made in equipment, training and personnel. Despite this, piracy remains a major threat in the region. The risks facing seafarers from all parts of the world have become more serious.

Piracy is also a significant obstacle to development. To fully understand the detrimental impact that piracy has on the region, Norway supports a study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which will be presented later this year. It is important to identify and address the root causes of piracy. But we cannot afford to delay taking action: the issue of piracy is simply too serious.

It is hard to see how legislation relating to illegal fishing, pollution or smuggling can be enforced if we fail in the fundamental task of protecting seafarers and vessels from piracy and safeguarding their right to safe passage.

A great deal has been achieved since 2011. But more efforts are needed to counter the negative developments. While regional cooperation is crucial, it cannot replace the individual responsibility of Member States. Regional cooperation cannot be effective without the full commitment of all those taking part.

Ultimately, each Member State has a sovereign obligation to combat piracy.

The Security Council also has a role to play. It can and should take robust action to make the oceans safe and secure.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico,
Marcelo Ebrard**

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico wishes to thank India for convening this debate on the current challenges to maritime security, placing special emphasis on international cooperation. We also welcome the timely and informative briefings by Ms. Maria Luisa Ribeiro Viotti and Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly. For a country like ours, with over 11,000 km of coastline, this topic is highly relevant.

A multitude of legal areas and instruments converge around maritime security. They range from piracy and terrorist acts, including attacks on civilian vessels on the high seas which put international peace and security at risk, to the commission of other crimes and illegal activities such as trafficking in arms and drugs, which, although they represent challenges to public security and accountability, are not necessarily considered international crimes that fall under the competence of this Council.

Therefore, we believe that an approach focusing on state, institutional and legal synergies is needed to strengthen maritime security. Maritime activity is so vast that it opens up the possibility of a large number of illicit acts. Some 90 per cent of international trade is conducted by sea.

Our oceans are invaluable as the main regulators of climate, a source of food and livelihood as well as mineral and genetic resources that enrich industry and technology. Many and diverse areas of human activity come together in the oceans: fishing, the environment, labour rights, international trade and tourism, to name just a few.

We must bear in mind General Assembly resolution [75/239](#) on oceans and the law of the sea, which addresses in detail all these issues and includes a specific section on maritime safety and security. We would be remiss if we also did not reiterate our support for the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which is the principal authority in that area.

We take this opportunity to endorse the universal and unified character of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Mexico played a central role in negotiations for this instrument. It is known as the “constitution of the seas”, and for good reason: it sets out a legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas should take place, hence its strategic importance as the foundation for activities and cooperation at the national, regional and global level.

Although it is necessary to strengthen cooperation at all levels to guarantee the security of our oceans, seas and coastlines, it is equally important for this to be carried out with the full support of the various legal regimes involved and under the organizations and institutions with competence in the area, taking into account that not all phenomena putting the security of the seas at risk are comparable, nor do they meet the same gravity threshold.

In that regard, we believe that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, together with IMO, should take on a strategic role in coordinating cooperation among States, in order to strengthen security and accountability measures with respect to illicit activities on the oceans and seas.

In accordance with the relevant international instruments to combat transnational organized crime, obligations in that area should be met in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-intervention in the affairs of other States, within a framework of international cooperation. An issue

of great concern to Mexico is that women and girls remain vulnerable to trafficking in migrants and persons through maritime channels.

The approach to maritime security cannot nor should not be centred on militarization of the oceans. Both national measures and international cooperation must be reinforced in order to avoid illicit acts and to ensure that their perpetrators are brought to justice, with respect for national institutions and under the rule of law.

Mexico is a member of the Operative Network of Regional Cooperation of Maritime Authorities of the Americas. One of its main objectives is to promote regional cooperation among naval academies and training centres for merchant marine officers, always seeking the peaceful settlement of disputes.

To promote maritime security, Mexico takes various actions that are supported by two guiding principles: maintaining the rule of law and safeguarding human life at sea. I would like to mention three of them:

1. The maritime and port authorities have been consolidated into one agency, which improves the ability to take action in accordance with the international conventions to which we are party.
2. Safe anchorage zones were established, to ensure the rule of law and prevent illegal acts from being committed on the coasts, and
3. Regulations for port and maritime protection were adopted that incorporated the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code into national legislation.

I will conclude by reiterating that the seas and oceans represent a genuinely global space on our planet. As a space that belongs to all of us, it is up to all of us to respect and safeguard it. Unilateral measures, by definition, are excluded. It is imperative that cooperation and coordination must prevail among the international community for the benefit of all.

Annex XIV

Statement by the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ben Wallace

Of the many things that unite our nations, among the most significant are our mutual dependence on maritime trade and freedom of navigation, both ensured by the rule of law.

As an island nation, Britain needs no reminding that those three things are vital to global security, prosperity and the environment.

Fundamental to them is our absolute commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Upholding the Convention must remain a common endeavour of the international community. The Convention represents the foundation of ocean governance which must be respected

The United Kingdom has a proud history in maritime security. We build international support to deter and counter hostile State activity at sea, including piracy, smuggling, illegal fishing and other maritime crimes worldwide.

We are currently preparing a new national strategy for maritime security, to articulate in one place the United Kingdom's full range of objectives and interventions in the maritime domain up to 2025.

But the reality is that preserving the law of the sea, and access to it, matters to everyone here today. And the fact that some are increasingly prepared to use their strategic locations off key international waterways to destabilize and threaten our precious freedoms should concern us all.

A case in point is the incident on 29 July 2021 off the coast of Oman, which involved the Liberia-flagged merchant vessel *Mercer Street*. United Kingdom and international assessments have concluded that the ship was attacked by Iran using one or more unmanned aerial vehicles. Besides damage to the vessel, one British and one Romanian national were killed.

We condemn this deliberate, unlawful and targeted attack. It is a clear violation of international law by Iran. Not only does an attack of this nature threaten global commerce, the safety of shipping, the lives of seafarers and the region's marine environment, but it undermines the rules-based system on which our shared peace and security depends.

At a time of growing anxiety, it is ever more important that our nations stand in solidarity to shore up that system, because the rules-based international order is not self-perpetuating and the laudable multilateralism of this place is not an alternative to but an extension of our nations' determination and ability to proactively maintain it.

That means three things.

First, calling out hostile State activity and unacceptable behaviour at sea, whether piracy, smuggling, illegal fishing, illegal incursions into territorial waters or other maritime crimes. Together, we must be ready to attribute, challenge, deter and penalize such behaviour.

Second, it means promoting the rights and freedoms enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – the bedrock of ocean governance – to ensure that they remain so, in every part of the world. We have to be clear that a legally enshrined international treaty, bearing the signature of 168 parties, cannot simply be junked on a whim. And no, not just in the South China Sea, but the Convention does apply there, just as it does in the rest of the world's seas and oceans.

Like India, the United Kingdom has a vision for a free, open and secure Indo-Pacific. That is why the United Kingdom's recent integrated review of foreign, security, defence and development policy set out our strategic "tilt" towards the Indo-Pacific – the world's growth engine, home to half of its population and 40 per cent of global gross domestic product, offering some of our biggest opportunities but also posing some of our greatest challenges. Whatever happens there matters to the world.

And that is why you will find the United Kingdom more persistently engaged and increasingly proactive in the region. As part of this, Prime Ministers Modi and Johnson agreed a new maritime partnership in the western Indian Ocean in May this year. And I would like to congratulate India on the election of their candidate for Executive Director of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia – the Singapore based counter-piracy and maritime crime information-sharing centre.

But there is no greater demonstration of the United Kingdom's commitment to the region than the maiden deployment of our carrier strike group: a major multilateral deployment of cutting-edge military capabilities, alongside some of our closest allies. Seeking not to confront an adversary in a crisis but to confidently project our values and commitment to the rule of law.

Finally, though, our commitment on maritime issues must go beyond traditional "security". We all have a responsibility to do what we can to protect our climate, so the United Kingdom is leading global efforts to safeguard the marine environment. We are championing the protection of at least 30 per cent of the global ocean by 2030. We are hosting the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow later this year. And we are supporting the marine environment and poverty reduction around the world through our new \$700 million Blue Planet Fund.

Having recently returned from a trip to the Indo-Pacific, I have a new-found appreciation for the beauty of that region, but also a renewed appreciation of the threats that all our nations – and our laws – face at sea.

So I have a clear understanding of our duty, as a Permanent Five nation of the Security Council, to fulfil our essential obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. And I have increased confidence that regional and international cooperation is not just possible but the only means of enhancing maritime security.

Because I have no doubt whatsoever that if we work together to ensure the primacy of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and to defend our seas, then the enhancement to not just our security but our trade, our environment and the quality of life of our people will be to the benefit of us all.

Annex XV**Statement by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Camillo Gonsalves**

At the outset, permit me to commend the Republic of India for convening today's open debate, and I thank the briefers for their insightful remarks. I would also more personally like to thank his excellency Prime Minister Modi for his public solidarity and support with our Prime Minister, the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, who was recently victim of – as he termed it, and correctly – a ghastly attack. I would like to inform Prime Minister Modi we are warmed by his solidarity and that our Prime Minister is well on the way on returning to his duties.

As a small island developing State whose material existence and continued prosperity is inextricably linked with the oceanic resources that define and circumscribe our archipelago, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines attaches great significance to this discussion. Indeed, in our subregion, over 120 per cent of our territorial space is marine space.

More than 3 billion people globally depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. It is imperative that the social, economic, environmental and security considerations pertaining to our seascapes are fully taken into account. A range of interrelated maritime security risks threaten life, living and production in both maritime and landlocked States. And we have heard them in full throughout this discussion, including:

- Piracy and armed robbery;
- The illegal trade of arms, ammunition, narcotics and other contraband;
- Irregular migration and human trafficking;
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- Deliberate damage to marine ecosystems.

These challenges can only be solved through comprehensive multilateral approaches that systematically address the peace and security, developmental and humanitarian concerns of all States. Only then would a prosperous future for all nations – including our small island developing States who rely so much on our oceans – be assured.

The destructive forces of climate change, which pose existential risks to low-lying coastal countries – such as those interspersed across our Caribbean Community (CARICOM) – further accentuates these challenges. The international community's efforts to enhance maritime security will prove inadequate until meaningful action is taken to arrest global warming, which jeopardizes the social fabric of States everywhere and turns our marine environment into yet another threat to security on land.

Recent escalations in the Gulf of Oman bring into even closer focus the need for all States to work together within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to ensure freedom of navigation and innocent passage. Certainly, each country is duty-bound to safeguard its coastal resources, defend its maritime borders and protect its citizens and interests from seaborne threats. However, these actions must always comply with international law and fully respect the sacrosanct principles of State sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends the recently signed memorandum of understanding between the African Union and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to

reinforce joint efforts to address maritime safety. We also commend Kenya for its leadership of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, and the Indian Ocean Commission for its support to this important Group. These multilateral mechanisms are crucial to the international efforts to strengthen maritime security.

We in CARICOM have made tremendous strides to enhance maritime security by improving our surveillance and intelligence-gathering capacities, modernizing the law enforcement and criminal justice sectors and upgrading and harmonizing regulations for travel and trade. Through multilateral initiatives such as the Regional Security System, the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative commission, my country has worked to advance the maintenance of peace and security at our shorelines and beyond and throughout the “zone of peace” that is circumnavigated by the Caribbean seas.

Our delegation emphasizes the importance of information-sharing to help address increasingly sophisticated networks of transnational organized crime which undermine maritime security and threaten international peace. In this regard, we hail the invaluable role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in promoting intergovernmental coordination and providing capacity-building assistance through the Global Maritime Crime Programme. Further development support is required to help strengthen the institutional arrangements that govern our marine resources.

The plethora of security challenges that envelop maritime nations, particularly small island developing States, demand a firm recommitment by the international community to enhance our multilateral cooperation. This is the crucial prerequisite in the pursuit of peace, security and development, for all nations and peoples – especially to those of us who so heavily depend on the oceans for life and living in this precarious period of climate change.

Annex XVI

Statement by the Minister for Transport, Climate, Environment and Communications of Ireland, Eamon Ryan

Ireland, as you know, is an island nation. Indeed, taking our seabed area into account, Ireland is one of the largest European Union member States, with sovereign or exclusive rights over one of the largest sea-to-land ratios of any European Union State.

Throughout our history, the sea has protected us, nourished us and, indeed, defined us. The Atlantic Ocean, which crashes against our west coast, is often forbidding and wild; however, for Ireland and the Irish, the sea has been a highway that has connected us to the world.

For this reason, maritime issues have always been important to us. Ireland has developed a maritime action plan called “harnessing our ocean wealth”, which emphasizes that healthy, sustainable ecosystems, international cooperation and collaboration underpinned by good governance, with maritime safety and security, are key enablers of a sustainable maritime future. We were so pleased to be able to learn from and share our experiences with many of the other small island nations at our most recent ocean summit.

Such cooperation goes to the heart of the issues that we are discussing here today, and I would like to commend India for its initiative in bringing this vital topic to the Security Council’s attention today. I would also like to thank the briefers for their informative presentations. I also welcome the agreement of a presidential statement by the Council on today’s important subject.

The free and peaceful use of the seas and oceans is vital for us all, not least for island nations such as Ireland. Delivering on this objective means that the seas remain a resource for all nations, as well as a medium for interconnectivity and mutual understanding.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted every aspect of our world, including maritime security. During these uncertain times, global cooperation is essential to safeguard our seas against increasing threats and security challenges. It is also imperative that we protect our seas and oceans from climate change and other environmental threats. The two are, of course, connected, and Ireland recognizes the need for this Council to consider climate-related security risks in delivering on its mandate.

I will make three points on today’s important topic: the centrality of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; the importance of a comprehensive approach to maritime security; and Ireland’s contribution to this issue, including through the European Union.

All activities at sea are regulated within the legal framework established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which the Secretary-General has described as the constitution for our oceans.

The Convention sets down a series of rights and duties for coastal States and is central to the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes.

As an island State, Ireland has played an active role in the development of these rules.

Ensuring respect for this landmark Convention is critical for maritime security, as it settles rules for the mutual benefit of all States.

Ireland calls on all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to consider doing so now, as well as acceding to other international instruments developed within its framework, including the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, the recent United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

My second point is that international cooperation is fundamental to achieving global maritime security and safety.

As the Secretary-General said on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, “we must ensure that activities are sustainable, relationships among stakeholders are adequately regulated, needs and challenges are addressed, and peace and security is maintained”.

Achieving this is, of course, complex. To address maritime security effectively, we need a comprehensive approach that addresses all aspects – efforts to counter transnational crime at sea, including piracy; the freedom of navigation; and the protection of the marine environment and the safeguarding of the oceans’ resources.

There are numerous existing Security Council resolutions that promote maritime security, and the implementation of these resolutions keeps our seas safer.

Finally, as a committed troop-contributing country, to both United Nations and European Union peacekeeping and crisis management operations, Ireland is very aware that efforts to preserve peace and international security have to take account of the maritime context.

As a committed member of the European Union, Ireland supports and promotes the dedicated strategy on maritime security developed by the European Union. Ireland and the European Union depend on open, protected and secure seas and oceans for economic development, free trade, transport, energy security, tourism, and the good status of the marine environment.

I want to particularly highlight the European Union’s cooperation with the United Nations in responding to risks and threats in the maritime domain, including the naval operations set up to prevent and disrupt illicit activities at sea. These operations also provide support to, and complement, United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, with missions such as the European Union Capacity-Building Mission in Somalia, which, led by the former head of the Irish Coast Guard, contributes to the establishment and capacity-building of the maritime civilian law enforcement capability in Somalia.

The European Union’s Operation Atalanta has successfully helped to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing off the coast of Somalia while also addressing the illicit charcoal trade and weapons trafficking. As Chair of the Somalia Sanctions Committee, Ireland closely monitors developments in these areas.

As many are aware, one of the guiding principles for our Security Council tenure is accountability. Ireland recognizes the role of sanctions in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security at sea.

In this regard, I would like to highlight the important role played by the European Union’s Operation IRINI in the Mediterranean, which implements the arms embargo imposed on Libya in accordance with Security Council resolution [2292 \(2016\)](#). On specific maritime security tasks, it monitors and gathers information on illicit exports from Libya of petroleum, crude oil and refined petroleum products and contributes to the capacity-building and training of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy.

Each of us benefits from our oceans, and in turn, we must each meet our responsibilities to protect this resource that sustains so many of us.

Addressing maritime security directly contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, not only in relation to Goal 14 but across the Agenda's economic, social and environmental dimensions.

A concerted, coordinated response is what is required, and multilateralism is key to solving this challenge. That is our global responsibility.

Annex XVII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations

[Original: Chinese]

Maintaining maritime security is of great importance for promoting world peace and stability, as well as for development and prosperity. At present, with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic still raging around the world and regional conflicts continuing to intensify, pirate attacks, armed robberies at sea, and maritime drug and weapons-smuggling and human trafficking are rampant, further aggravating instabilities in the affected regions.

China attaches great importance to maritime security. It has always advocated a common concept of maritime security characterized by mutually beneficial cooperation and win-win results, and is committed to creating a maritime security structure reflecting equality, mutual trust, fairness and justice, with uniformly shared construction and benefits. In the context of today's meeting, I would like to emphasize the following points:

First, maritime security cooperation should uphold the concept of the seas as a community of common destiny. On this blue planet, the oceans do not divide humanity into isolated islands, but rather bring them together in a community of common destiny. The common security of all countries is bound up with the peace and tranquillity of the seas, and all countries need to share in the maintenance of that peace and tranquillity. At present, a small minority of countries are promoting exclusionary regional strategies in the Asia Pacific region in an attempt to create and intensify maritime conflicts, damage the sovereignty and security interests of the countries affected, and undermine regional peace and stability. This flies in the face of the aspirations of most countries in the region to seek peace, cooperation and development. China calls on all countries to strengthen dialogue and exchanges on maritime issues, deepen practical cooperation and work together to address all types of maritime security threats and challenges on the basis of mutual respect, equality and enhanced mutual trust.

Second, maritime security cooperation should abide by international law. International conventions widely accepted by the international community, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea of 1974, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, together constitute the international legal basis for combating transnational crimes at sea and strengthening maritime security cooperation. All countries should interpret and apply relevant international conventions completely, accurately and in good faith, jointly safeguard the authority and effectiveness of relevant international conventions, and jointly safeguard the international maritime order based on international law.

Third, maritime security cooperation should serve the economic and social development of coastal countries. The ocean is a treasure house of resources for human survival, and is also a bridge linking countries for trade. The international community should help coastal countries to actively develop their marine economies, fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, tap into the dynamic of growth and follow the path of mutual benefit and win-win results. China is actively promoting the Belt and Road Initiative and is committed to the joint construction of safe and efficient sea lanes and the jointly establishment of a platform for maritime

cooperation to promote common development. It should be pointed out that the marine environment is of vital importance for the sustainable development of the marine economy. The unilateral decision by Japan to dispose of the water contaminated by the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident by discharging it into the sea was irresponsible. China strongly urges Japan to conscientiously fulfil its international obligations, rescind its mistaken decisions, deal prudently with the issue of the water contaminated at the Fukushima nuclear power plant, and avoid damaging the health of people in coastal countries as well as the global marine ecology overall.

Fourth, maritime security cooperation should continue to focus on combating piracy. Piracy is presently on the rise, and the situation is particularly grave in the waters off West Africa and Somalia. We should take very seriously the potential threat to the world economy and regional stability that piracy poses. China supports the continued efforts of the international community to carry out escort operations in Somali coastal waters in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, and will continue to conduct joint maritime exercises with Southeast Asian countries aimed at maintaining maritime security and jointly responding to the threat of piracy. China will also continue to support the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to fully implement a comprehensive anti-piracy strategy. China is willing to continue to deepen practical cooperation with other countries in the areas of combating piracy and enforcing maritime law, in an effort to achieve peace and tranquillity on the seas.

The Security Council is not the appropriate place to discuss the South China Sea issue. The United States raised the South China Sea issue in its statement just now, which China resolutely rejects. At present, through the joint efforts of China and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, the situation in the South China Sea remains generally stable and all countries enjoy freedom of navigation and overflight in accordance with international law. China and ASEAN countries are committed to the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and are striving for the early conclusion of a “South China Sea code of conduct”. We have the determination and the capability to effectively maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea.

The United States has no business making irresponsible remarks with regard to the South China Sea issue. By frequently sending advanced ships and aircraft into the South China Sea, the United States, an extraregional country, wantonly provokes and openly foments discord among regional countries, which is the biggest threat to the stability of the South China Sea.

While the United States has yet to accede to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, it sees itself as a judge enforcing the Convention, hectoring other countries and meddling in their affairs, and is utterly lacking in credibility on marine issues.

The sensationalizing of the South China Sea arbitration case by the United States in the Security Council is an entirely political ploy. In the South China Sea arbitration case, the arbitral tribunal violated the principle of “State consent” and exceeded its authority; the obvious errors in its determination of facts and application of law rendered its ruling invalid and devoid of any binding force.

Annex XVIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations

[Original: Arabic]

The maritime sector has been an artery for the growth and prosperity of civilizations throughout history. To this day, it remains among the most effective means of conducting international commerce, from transporting goods and energy supplies to tourism. It has also been a cornerstone for enhancing historical and cultural ties among the various countries that today make up our international community.

On the other hand, the seas are not without threats to international peace and security. These include terrorism, piracy, trafficking in persons, drugs and illegal energy resources, and other organized crime activities. There are also risks from climate change, environmental pollution and biodiversity degradation that have serious economic and commercial implications, in addition to causing loss of life and adversely affecting freedom of movement and navigation.

For these reasons, securing maritime space and sound ocean management are critical both for guaranteeing the safety of legal maritime activities – one of the most important engines of the global economy – and for reducing threats from the seas to States. It will also help the blue economy, on which island States depend for their livelihoods and development.

Against that backdrop, Tunisia would like to emphasize the following points: First, international cooperation is essential. No one State alone can succeed in ensuring maritime safety without operating within comprehensive bilateral, regional and international frameworks. The maritime domain is geographically extensive with overlapping sectors and activities. There are also overlapping legal jurisdictions and multiple actors that include States, specialized agencies and non-governmental parties. Therefore, securing the safety of the maritime domain and improving its governance are vital necessities for all. Those goals are the shared responsibility of all nations of the world, including landlocked States.

In that connection, Tunisia emphasizes the importance of international legal frameworks, and in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and relevant Security Council resolutions. We stress the need to enhance the leadership role of the United Nations – and various relevant bodies such as the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INTERPOL – in implementing international standards of conduct to ensure peaceful cooperation among States in the maritime domain on basis of equality and good-neighbourliness.

We must also note the importance of bilateral and multilateral exchange of information and expertise among law enforcement and border protection agencies, customs and judicial cooperation, disaster relief and disaster reduction coordination, harmonization of legal systems, and taking stock of emerging threats and challenges. Equally importantly, cooperation must also include training programmes and the transfer of maritime monitoring technologies and equipment for developing countries, in order to establish genuine partnerships to maintain maritime safety.

Secondly, ensuring the safety of the maritime domain does not stop at the end of the dock. It must include measures to protect commercial and tourist vessels and sea routes, build regional capacities and create solutions on the ground in a coordinated and ongoing manner. Efforts must be redoubled to analyse the underlying causes of various threats to maritime security. That includes conflicts that produce

waves of forcibly displaced civilians, natural disasters caused by climate change, and lack of good governance and development, all factors that might put coastal communities at risk of falling victim to maritime criminal gangs.

Thirdly, States must adopt a cooperative approach in administration of the maritime domain, bearing in mind the role played by non-governmental actors in ensuring the safe transport of persons, goods and energy resources, and the smooth operation of vital marine facilities. In that connection, common platforms must be set up for cooperation and consultation with the private sector in order to raise awareness of threats, identify shortcomings and consider how best to prevent and avoid them, in accordance with the relevant national and international legal frameworks.

From the Carthaginian civilization onward, the history of Tunisia has been closely linked to its coastal location on the shores of the Mediterranean, which has been a decisive factor in state-building through the ages. In keeping with its awareness that its maritime location is integral to its territorial integrity, Tunisia has taken major steps to focus its legal and institutional frameworks and reinforce bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

Tunisia is eager to strengthen maritime control, data exchange and joint monitoring systems with neighbouring countries, as well as to take part in regional and international partnerships such as the Neptune II operation, which covered seven seaports in six countries on both shores of the Mediterranean – Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, France, Italy and Spain – in partnership with INTERPOL to target criminal networks trafficking in persons, weapons and drugs.

We also note the cooperation between Tunisia and the United Nations, including with UNODC, which in 2017 culminated in the signature of a memorandum of understanding with the World Customs Organization as part of the implementation of the Container Control Programme, which is aimed at securing goods and the commercial supply chain with a view to preventing illicit trafficking, promoting integrity and combating corruption in seaports.

At the African continental level, maritime security is a security and economic priority, particularly with the escalation of piracy and the threat to maritime safety and international trade routes. We reaffirm the importance of the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy, the Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (the Lomé Charter) and the African Charter on Maritime Transport. In closing, we affirm that Tunisia will remain actively involved in all international and regional efforts and frameworks to strengthen international cooperation for maritime security, which is an integral part of international security overall.

Annex XIX

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations, Mitch Fifield

The blue economy, which depends on healthy oceans, has never been more important for livelihoods and economic growth. This importance will only grow, with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimating that \$3 trillion will be generated by ocean based industry by 2030, doubling from \$1.5 trillion in 2010.

At the same time, maritime security threats – traditional and new – are growing. They are more interconnected than ever before. And they demand cooperation – between States but also non-State and private actors.

Terrorism, trafficking, people-smuggling and other transnational crimes are persistent challenges.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing takes \$10–23 billion of fish out of the world's oceans. Unchecked, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing threatens the long-term sustainability of global fish resources and marine biodiversity. Coupled with environmental damage, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing threatens food security and livelihoods worldwide. And it can lead to tensions between States.

In the Pacific, Australia supports the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency to help monitor fishing fleets to support sustainable fishing and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Under the Pacific Maritime Security Program, we are gifting 21 new patrol vessels to 12 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste, as well as providing contracted aerial surveillance. In South-East Asia, we have launched a regional illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing programme that will provide education, training and improved capacity to partner nations.

Piracy and armed robbery remain a significant risk to global maritime security. In our region, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia reported 97 incidents of piracy or armed robbery in Asian waters. As a party to the Agreement, Australia supports efforts to share information, promote cooperation and build capacity across the region.

We recognize that we cannot solve these problems alone. Working in partnerships – bilateral, regional and multilateral – is vital.

Whether that is working together in support of the maritime pillar of the Outlook on the Indo Pacific of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, with its focus on the cooperative management of marine resources and transnational crime; or working with India under its Indo Pacific Oceans Initiative, with its strong focus on maritime security cooperation across the Indo-Pacific; or collaborating with Pacific Islands nations through the Pacific fusion centre, working with States, territories and regional organizations to analyse and respond to security challenges in our region.

Just as we cooperate to meet challenges to maritime security, so too do we need to work together to uphold the rules and norms which underpin an open and stable maritime order.

The foundation of maritime security and cooperation is the respect for international law and the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes. As we affirm each year in the General Assembly resolution on oceans and the law of the sea, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. It contains clear rules that

apply to all countries for maritime claims, the lawful uses of maritime spaces, including freedom of navigation and overflight, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Adherence to international law is fundamental to the continuing peace, prosperity and stability of our region. It allows all States – big and small – to resolve disputes peacefully, whether in the South China Sea or elsewhere.

In this respect, where international courts or tribunals have rendered binding decisions, we call on the parties to those decisions to abide by them.

The maritime security challenges raised in this Security Council debate cannot be addressed alone. They require collective, coordinated and determined effort. Australia is committed to working with all States to enhance maritime security and protect the marine environment.

Annex XX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Rabab Fatima**

Maritime security is an important and integral part of international peace and security. Throughout history, the oceans were always of vital economic and political importance. At present, around 90 per cent of global trade takes place through marine routes. Thus, maritime security is linked to global economic development. The rise of trade through marine routes also brings new challenges that require global political attention and action. These challenges include, among other elements, inter-State disputes; maritime terrorism; piracy; the trafficking of narcotics, people and illicit goods; arms proliferation; illegal fishing; marine litter and plastic pollution; maritime accidents and disasters; and the impact of climate change on marine ecology and biodiversity. Such a diverse range of issues and complexities warrants the international coordination that the maritime security agenda entails.

Bangladesh attaches high importance to maritime security. Following the peaceful settlement of maritime boundaries with India and Myanmar, we prioritized economic activities, including extracting marine resources from our maritime zone in the Bay of Bengal. A significant number of Bangladeshi people are working as seafarers around the globe. Thus, any insecurity on the global maritime routes will negatively impact the social, economic and environmental security of the country.

Many States are engaged in developing a framework for maritime security. Yet, in this globalized world and with the emergence of new technologies, maritime crimes are on the rise. The transnational nature of these crimes makes it impossible for one State to fight them alone. Therefore, we need a collective approach and renewed commitment to curb maritime crimes. Let me make some specific points in this regard.

First, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provides a comprehensive framework to address all possible threats to maritime security. This august Council has adopted a significant number of resolutions in this regard. We commend the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for supporting Member States in curbing maritime crime through the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Member States need to effectively and earnestly implement all the provisions of the Conventions and the Security Council resolutions for promoting maritime security.

Second, climate change has adverse impacts on global maritime security. Effective implementation of the relevant climate agreements, including the Paris Agreement, will play an important role in promoting maritime security. We urge Member States to make renewed commitments to further prevent the adverse impacts of climate change during the upcoming twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and thereby contribute to ensuring maritime security.

Third, the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdictions are critical to promoting maritime security. We would like to see the early conclusion of the international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. Bangladesh will remain actively and constructively engaged in the negotiations and the norm-setting process of the agreement.

Fourth, the root causes of maritime crimes should be identified, and Member States need to be properly equipped with the necessary technical, technological and financial supports to curb maritime crime. Intelligence- and information-sharing among Member States will play a critical role in enhancing national capacities in this regard.

Fifth, illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and the trafficking of narcotics are major problems in many maritime zones. Bangladesh enacted its own marine fisheries act in 2020, accommodating the necessary clauses for the prevention and control of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Bangladesh is also in the process of finalizing its maritime zones act. Nevertheless, without sufficient capacity to control illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and the trafficking of narcotics, it would be impossible for countries such as ours to combat those challenges. International cooperation is imperative in this regard.

Finally, maritime crime and terrorism must be controlled to safeguard the economic interests of our countries. However, while we endeavour to do so, we must not forget the humanitarian needs of the people in distress on the marine routes.

Bangladesh, as a littoral country of the Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean, engages itself to secure its maritime security interests in a cross-sectoral, comprehensive, coherent and cost-effective manner, in conformity with existing national and international laws, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant conventions and instruments. A shared unity of purpose and effort by all involved is necessary to maintain the safety and security of our maritime routes. Let us work together to reap the advantages and opportunities that the oceans offer us.

Annex XXI

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations

The maintenance of international peace and security is a shared goal that extends to both land and sea. The present debate provides an opportunity to Member States to reflect on how to address maritime security threats in an effective manner and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

With a coastline of close to 8,000 km, maritime safety is a priority for Brazil. Within its territorial sea and jurisdictional waters and at its ports, Brazil exercises its sovereignty with diligence and responsibility. There is no record of piracy in waters under Brazilian search and rescue responsibility.

Given this background, Brazil attaches great value to the normative and institutional framework that has developed over the years to ensure freedom of navigation and a peaceful maritime environment. Today, there is a solid international framework in place to ensure maritime security.

Brazil acknowledges the importance of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as the leading international organization responsible for maritime safety and security as well as the prevention of marine pollution. As a long-standing member of its Council since 1967, Brazil actively participates in all work carried out by IMO, sharing and advocating its ideals. At the same time, by its universal and unified character, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remains the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. In the more specialized area of transnational crime, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has helped Member States to curb maritime crimes.

Brazil strongly condemns the recent attack against the merchant vessel *Mercer Street* in international waters in the north Arabian Sea and conveys its condolences to the families of the two victims and to the Governments of Romania and the United Kingdom. Freedom of navigation must be upheld in accordance with international law.

Regional initiatives also play a key role in promoting maritime security. Brazil is a member of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, which was created 35 years ago by General Assembly resolution 41/11. The zone aims to promote cooperation among its Member States in the areas of development and peace and security, including environmental and maritime issues. Since its creation, the countries of the region have gathered in seven ministerial meetings, in addition to several other meetings and events at the technical level, in order to strengthen their ties and promote cooperation in areas such as global governance, socioeconomic development, disarmament, peace and security, defence, sustainable development, oceans and marine resources, and transnational crime.

In 2019, Brazil was affected by a severe heavy crude oil spill at sea of an unprecedented scale, which caused damage to over 3,600 km of the Brazilian coast. From the chemical composition of the spilled oil, we can conclude that it was not extracted in Brazil. By the pattern of its spreading along the coast, we can also conclude that it originated from a vessel that purposely sought to avoid detection. Over five thousand tons of crude oil were collected during months of work. This incident caused severe consequences to the marine environment and to thousands of Brazilians who rely on the ocean for their livelihoods.

While this incident clearly falls outside the mandate of the Security Council to maintain peace and security, there is one aspect that deserves its attention. Vessels

that purposely seek to avoid detection are a serious threat to all coastal States and might endanger maritime security. In order to ensure a safe maritime environment, it is essential to promote responsible navigation in the oceans, with the expansion of measures capable of preventing and facilitating the investigation of grave incidents at sea. Experience proves that cooperation and information exchange are among the most efficient tools for a safer maritime environment.

Capacity-building is also extremely important in promoting maritime security. Proper training as well as assistance in strengthening maritime security forces, while respecting sovereignty and local ownership, are useful tools to help coastal States in ensuring a safer maritime environment.

In conclusion, Brazil recognizes the role that the Security Council can play in maintaining international peace and security in the maritime environment. It has fulfilled its responsibility in the past by addressing specific aspects of piracy and armed robbery at sea in certain regions in the world where these problems are rife. At the same time, we are cognizant of the limitations of this organ to address other issues that, albeit related to maritime security, fall outside its powers, such as maritime pollution or illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. As serious as these actions might be, they do not per se constitute threats to international peace and security.

Annex XXII

Joint statement on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Gabon, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa and Uruguay, members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Argentina, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Gabon, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa and Uruguay, members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, would like to congratulate India for bringing the very important issue of maritime security to the Council's attention. We would also like to thank the briefers for their insightful presentations.

The zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic was established 35 years ago by General Assembly resolution [41/11](#). Since then, countries situated on the South Atlantic coastlines, on both the African and South American continents, have gathered in seven ministerial meetings, in addition to several other meetings and events at the technical level, in order to strengthen their ties and promote cooperation in areas such as global governance, socioeconomic development, disarmament, peace and security, decolonization, defence, sustainable development, oceans and marine resources, and transnational crime. On 29 July 2021, the General Assembly adopted resolution [75/312](#), reaffirming the principles that have guided the members of the zone since its inception.

Maritime security is one of main areas of concern of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. During its seventh ministerial meeting, the zone's members issued the Montevideo Declaration, in which they expressed concern at the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea posed to international navigation, maritime security and economic development of States in the region. They also recognized the leadership role that States members of the zone should play in this regard, taking into account the need for regional coordination efforts in order to counter activities of piracy and armed robbery at sea.

Moreover, the Montevideo Plan of Action, recognized by General Assembly resolutions [69/332](#) and [75/312](#), establishes that States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic should enhance cooperation on the monitoring, control and surveillance of vessels with a view to combating illicit activities as well as transnational organized crime at sea in the South Atlantic, including through the exchange of data and training in the operation of the long range identification and tracking of ships. In accordance with the Plan of Action, countries of the region participated in a virtual meeting, in October 2020, on the contribution of the zone to economic development and maritime security in the South Atlantic.

Bearing in mind the complementary role that regional mechanisms such as the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic play in the promotion of maritime safety and security in different areas of the planet, and recognizing that the respect for national sovereignty and regional leadership is essential to any comprehensive strategy to address maritime security threats, we acknowledge the International Maritime Organization as the leading international organization responsible for addressing these matters. At the same time, by its universal and unified character, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remains the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. In the more specialized area of transnational crime, we recognize the fundamental role that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has played in assisting Member States to fight crimes at sea.

We would also like to recognize the role the Security Council can play by addressing terrorism and transnational organized crime at sea, including the illegal

arms trade, in certain regions of the world where these phenomena pose a threat to international peace and security. At the same time, we should note that there are issues related to maritime security that go beyond the Council's competence, such as maritime pollution or illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

In conclusion, we would like to refer to what is stated in the open debate's concept note: the enhancement of maritime security is a case for international cooperation. The sea knows no borders; therefore, the promotion of a safer, more secure and more peaceful maritime environment depends on the joint and concerted action of all nations.

Annex XXIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the United Nations

Cyprus wishes to thank India for holding this timely debate on a very important issue and to add some national remarks to the statement of the European Union, to which we fully subscribe.

As the conduct of international relations is not limited to the territory of States, the Security Council should start by ensuring that its consideration of and decision-making on conflict situations is more comprehensive and is not limited to territorial situational awareness. Through its practice, the Council needs to consolidate the established international legal framework, which makes clear that a State's maritime space constitutes an extension of its territory, with the corresponding sovereignty and sovereign rights in each of its maritime zones, and with permanent sovereignty over its resources therein.

Maritime security is an inextricable component of maintaining international peace and security and is therefore at the core of the Security Council's primary responsibility. Without underestimating other sources of insecurity in the maritime domain (such as piracy, terrorism and crime), we believe that there is room for the Council to focus more on those maritime threats that fall within the purview of its primary function: the threat or use of force in the maritime space of States, a reality that Cyprus has faced daily and increasingly over the past few years; violations of international law in both the maritime space of States and the high seas; threats to the freedom of navigation; and friction resulting from maritime disputes between States, including regarding delimitation, boundaries and resources.

In order to respond to these threats, the Security Council has all the requisite tools at its disposal: a clear international legal order established by the Charter of the United Nations and a clear international legal framework which is fully reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. These rules define also the framework of international cooperation and provide the basis for the peaceful settlement of disputes. More importantly, however, this rules-based order constitutes the best means of prevention: respecting the maritime areas that international law recognizes for each coastal and island State would result in ensuring the safety and security that each of these States is entitled to enjoy in these areas.

More robust and holistic action by the Security Council could be the key to completing the shift from the gunboat paradigm to maritime multilateralism, i.e. rules-based State conduct and inter-State relations in the maritime domain, based on sovereign equality and respect for the sovereignty and sovereign rights of States in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We believe that non-compliance with the international law of the sea is currently undervalued as a threat to international peace and security, and we believe that violators should face more consequences.

Lastly, we need to remind ourselves why the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is one of the biggest achievements of the United Nations and a testament to effective multilateralism. Not only does it authoritatively set out the overarching legal framework for the governance of the oceans and seas, but it is a prime example of the international community's collective will to peacefully use our oceans and seas by adhering to the rule of law, including through the Convention's comprehensive dispute settlement regime. An example par excellence of the codification of customary international law and the progressive development of international law, the Convention has established itself as one of the most important

international treaties and as the constitution for our oceans through its implementation, consequential practice and relevant case law. Its significant material contribution to international peace and security, by setting universally accepted rules regarding maritime zones and the corresponding freedoms, rights and obligations of States and by providing clarity on navigational rights and freedoms, is undeniable. Given that the Convention reflects customary international law and is binding on all States, we urge all Member States that have not acceded to it to do so without any further delay.

Annex XXIV

Joint Nordic statement by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries – Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark.

The Nordic countries reaffirm their commitment to countering the threat of current as well as emerging hostile acts within the maritime domain. Enhancing maritime security calls for increased international cooperation.

Measures to counter hostile actions are found, inter alia, in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is the framework within which all activities in the oceans and sea must be carried out, and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation. Those key conventions are the cornerstones of the international legal framework.

At present, maritime security challenges occur all around the globe.

The Nordic countries are especially concerned by the situation in the Gulf of Guinea. The Gulf remains a major epicentre for offshore piracy and other maritime crimes affecting global trade. Kidnapping for ransom has reached a critical level, and the region now accounts for 95 per cent of all global cases of kidnapping at sea.

While addressing the short-term needs is necessary, it is important that the international community maintain its focus on the long term as well. In this context, military capabilities alone will not solve the maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea. An integrated and comprehensive approach is essential; thus, the international community should also focus on key regions where maritime security is weak and work in close partnership with regional organizations to help build local capacity to strengthen maritime security.

In the light of this, the Nordic countries reiterate their deep and genuine appreciation of the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to develop judicial and law enforcement capacity-building at both the national and regional levels.

Piracy is a land-born issue linked to social and economic issues in the affected states. Therefore, the international community and national Governments should work to address the contributing causes of offshore piracy, including by offering alternative means of livelihood and addressing local grievances. Regional cooperation, however important, cannot supplant the crucial role of each Member State in preventing pirates from using land territory to carry out pirate attacks or armed robberies at sea. Regional cooperation cannot function without the full commitment of those taking part.

Please allow me to turn to the situation in and around the Strait of Hormuz, the Red Sea and along the coast of Yemen, where tensions remain.

The Nordic countries are deeply concerned about the developments of the last year, including the unlawful attack committed on a merchant vessel off the coast of Oman, in violation of international law, including the law of the sea, which resulted in the loss of two innocent people from the United Kingdom and Romania. The Nordic countries condemn this heinous attack in the strongest possible terms, and our thoughts are with the crew and families of those killed in the attack.

The Nordic countries remain committed to ensuring the security and de-escalation in the Gulf of Guinea and the wider region. Dialogue with regional partners on issues related to maritime security and information-sharing – as well as

the broader regional security situation – are key to improved maritime situational awareness, which is essential for combating maritime security challenges in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

The Nordic countries reiterate their strong commitment to preventing and countering the maritime security challenges through a holistic approach, embedded in human rights and fundamental freedoms. These rights, in particular of women and girls, deserve due consideration also when it comes to maritime security challenges. Women’s meaningful participation is not only crucial because it is key to fully implement the WPS agenda, but is also crucial to increase the effectiveness of measures and policies aimed at preventing and countering maritime security challenges. In this regard, we reiterate our commitment to promoting and supporting the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security.

A comprehensive and devoted approach to maritime security is essential to safeguarding common prosperity and security interests within the maritime domain, including our shared ambitions for sustainability.

Annex XXV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, Cristian Espinosa**

[Original: Spanish]

Allow me first of all to congratulate India for including this central topic on the formal agenda of the Security Council. I also appreciate the briefings by Ms. Maria Luisa Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General and Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

We agree with the starting point reflected in the concept note for this debate, that no country in the world can by itself monitor or protect the assets, resources or locations from which transnational dangers threaten global security.

We also agree that military capability on the seas is essential but not sufficient to overcome the challenges of maritime security, unless accompanied by an integrated and coordinated effort that encompasses all the dimensions of the problem.

We recognize that this is the first debate of the Council with an integrated approach that covers public, private, civilian and military coordination mechanisms, the international normative framework for maritime security, and lastly, the need for awareness of the maritime domain.

In that regard, I would like to point out that, just a week ago, Ecuador observed Maritime Awareness Days 2021, from 3 to 5 August, where it disseminated a maritime vision, efforts for detection of illegal fishing and spatial planning of Ecuador's marine areas, among other key elements.

Therefore, I would now like to raise three basic points. The first is Ecuador's concern at security problems on the world's high seas, which include terrorism, piracy and armed robbery. These crimes are linked with trafficking in human beings, drugs and weapons, and involve transnational organized crime, which we condemn.

Ecuador furthermore condemns in the strongest possible terms terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and considers that multilateralism is the best way to combat this scourge; we therefore believe it is essential to adopt an international agreement on that subject.

My second point is the need to expand international cooperation as a vital tool to improve capacities for prevention, protection and reaction, to overcome the problems posed by criminal activity on the high seas, including through the exchange of information and intelligence, as well as through technology transfer.

And third, I would like to draw attention to the existing international framework, which is the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and above all the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Ecuador reaffirms that the Convention is the main legal framework in respect of activities taking place on the oceans and seas and recognizes the importance of the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea and the main mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes among States.

Ecuador frequently encounters fishing vessels under foreign flags near our Exclusive Economic Zone, in particular near to the Galapagos Marine Reserve. Our Galapagos Islands and their adjacent waters host marine ecosystems of high biodiversity and represent a prime location for the reproduction of many species of fish and whales.

For this reason, we are deeply concerned by illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing that continues to be one of the greatest threats to fish populations and marine

ecosystems. This has serious implications for the conservation and management of ocean resources, as well as for food security. We reiterate that all States are obligated to implement conservation measures for transboundary and highly migratory fish stocks.

Lastly, I would like to confirm Ecuador's commitment to fully support global efforts for maritime security.

Annex XXVI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, Taye Atske-Selassie**

The open debate on maritime security and the call for enhanced international cooperation is a timely topic of discussion. There is renewed focus and new manifestations of competition on maritime zones which, at times, border on political tension. This is particularly relevant for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden – maritime zones adjacent to and pivotal for the African continent in general and the Horn of Africa in particular.

Maritime zones are indispensable for sustaining life on our planet as well as for the infrastructures and interactions of our globalized world. Similarly, maritime zones have become a ground for organized crimes and disasters, including human, weapons, and drugs trafficking; piracy; and the dumping of hazardous and polluting waste and substances. The safety of seafarers and maritime workers has also become an issue of serious concern.

There is also a changing power dynamic and competition in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Commercial and military interest in the maritime region is growing. Similarly, we have witnessed an increase in criminal activities, including crimes that are highly interlinked with the national security concerns of the countries in the Horn of Africa region.

We are of the conviction that maritime security has to be approached from multidimensional geopolitical and strategic underpinnings. Further, in parallel with curbing marine crimes, we must work on enhancing the sustainable development of the maritime environment and addressing the root causes of the crimes. This demands a coherent and participatory approach by all States and stakeholders concerned.

We see a great opportunity for cooperation and development, as well as for the protection of maritime security, if the renewed interest in the maritime zone is managed properly. This requires the ownership and equal participation of littoral and non-littoral countries surrounding maritime zones.

Africa is the largest island bordering marine zones of global security concern, with more than 26,000 nautical miles of coastline and with 90 per cent of its international trade transported on the sea. Accordingly, the African Union adopted the Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa of 2016 and the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy.

The Charter and Strategy advance not only maritime security but also marine development security. They also prescribe the need for a cohesive and multidisciplinary approach towards maritime security. In addition, Agenda 2063 flags the blue/ocean economy as one of the main areas of potential for the continent's overall development.

Similarly, in October 2019, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) agreed to advance a common position on maritime affairs. Member States of IGAD are mindful of the dissected approaches towards the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden – maritime zones over which the IGAD region has a primary standing.

The IGAD region is set to follow a collective approach to challenges in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden by strengthening regional cooperation. To this end, we have forged cooperation at the bilateral and interregional organization levels to ensure partnership on maritime security.

The regional approach will enable the addressing of undue competition and the resulting political tension and also the ad hoc, sponsor-based mechanisms that, unless curbed, will exacerbate the prevailing insecurities.

Access to the sea and the navigational right of all States is a fundamental principle of international law. Accordingly, maritime security is the preoccupation and standing of both littoral and non-littoral countries. Any arrangement or platform that seeks to forge comprehensive international cooperation on the sector must involve non-littoral countries. In this regard, Ethiopia opposes ad hoc arrangements and sponsor-based national initiatives and clubs on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Annex XXVII

Statement by the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, in its capacity as observer

Maritime security aims to ensure the free and peaceful use of the seas and is a prerequisite for safe, clean and secure oceans and seas for all types of activities. It is, hence, a clear priority for the European Union and its member States.

The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia,* Montenegro* and Albania,* as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union and its member States recognize that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected all areas of life, with increasing implications for global peace and international stability, including maritime security. Supply chain disruption during the pandemic has shown the importance of maritime routes for the global economy. The European Union will continue to work with partners to promote respect for the basic principles of maritime passage, security and safety, as well as the protection of the oceans, to strengthen its role as a global maritime security provider and to promote international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The European Union is committed to strengthening partnerships with international organisations, in particular the United Nations system, including the International Maritime Organization, and regional partners with a view to securing the free and peaceful use of the global maritime domain. In this regard, we welcome today's open debate and thank India for bringing this item on this month's agenda.

The European Union has elaborated and implemented – for almost a decade – an ambitious policy framework through a dedicated European Union maritime security strategy. This strategy, which has been refined by the Council conclusions on maritime security of June 2021, seeks to address traditional, non-traditional and emerging maritime security challenges and is founded on four complementary pillars. The strategy focuses on strong coordination and cooperation at all levels and across all sectors (civil-civil, civil-military and military-military), within European Union borders and beyond, and on dynamic international cooperation based on inclusive multilateralism to enhance a rules-based governance at sea under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which establishes the overarching legal framework within which all activities in oceans and seas must be carried out.

With its 168 parties, including the European Union, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is rightly recognized as the constitution of the oceans whose provisions generally reflect customary international law and are thus binding on all States. To this end, it is imperative that both the freedoms enjoyed under the Convention by all States, as well as the sovereignty and sovereign rights of coastal States over their maritime zones, including those generated by islands, are respected.

The European Union reiterates its strong opposition to any unilateral actions that could undermine regional stability and the international rules-based order and urges all States to resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including its dispute settlement mechanisms. Deliberate and unjustified acts such as the recent incident involving the merchant ship *Mercer Street*, which was engaged in

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process.

peaceful navigation and using a well-established shipping lane, constitute a flagrant breach of international law and infringe on the rules enshrined in the Convention.

Highlights of the wide range of actions that the European Union implements to promote maritime security at the United Nations and international levels include maritime operations such as Operation IRINI of the European Union Naval Force, implementing the arms embargo on Libya in accordance with Security Council resolution 2292 (2016); Operation Atalanta of the Naval Force, in the Indian Ocean, which is the United Nations interlocutor for the World Food Programme vessels escort programme and has been successfully fighting piracy off the Somali coast since 2008, and whose mandate has recently been updated to tackle drug trafficking and enforcing the United Nations arms embargo on Somalia; and numerous maritime situational awareness initiatives and capacity-building programmes for coastal partner States in the Gulf of Guinea, Red Sea, the Caribbean or the East and South China Seas. Operational cooperation and training at sea take place with external partners through joint anti-criminal activities conducted by Operation Atalanta together with the Japan Self-Defence Forces, the Djiboutian Navy and the Indian naval forces in the vicinity of its area of operation.

In support of regional agreements and international codes of conduct, the European Union and its member States closely coordinate their capabilities and financial aid to enhance the maritime situational awareness of partner countries and to improve regional cooperation and networking between maritime law enforcement agencies.

In collaboration with United Nations offices and agencies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, with whom new opportunities for closer collaboration are regularly explored, the European Union funds and implements projects to secure ports and sea lines of trade and communication around the global maritime domain. The European Union and its member States also continue to be engaged through actions combating illicit trafficking activities – such as the trafficking of human beings, drugs and firearms – and through the provision of funding to projects supporting fight against criminal networks active in this area.

Let us add that climate change and environmental degradation are an existential threat to humanity and biodiversity, as well as to healthy oceans and seas, with increasing implications for global peace and security and international stability, including maritime security, and require an urgent collective response by the international community.

In a rapidly evolving world, the European Union will continue to support the United Nations as the indispensable forum for international cooperation and the cornerstone of the multilateral system, including through more diverse and inclusive partnerships with all relevant stakeholders – including United Nations Member States, regional organizations, civil society, young people, international financial institutions, the private sector and academia – to support its modernization and shape global responses to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The European Union will remain a major driving force behind a truly inclusive, networked multilateralism and will provide global leadership, in view of a safer, more stable and prosperous world for all.

Annex XXVIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations

Fiji expresses its gratitude to Prime Minister for India, Honourable Narendra Modi for convening this Security Council open debate on the crucial question of maritime safety and security, a vital component of international peace and security. Over 70 per cent of our planet is ocean. Over 90 per cent of world's commerce travels by seas. The ocean is the major source of world's food.

Fiji's well-being and survival depend on the security and health of its maritime area within the context of a safe and secure Blue Pacific. Ocean resources contribute enormously to our well-being and to that of other Pacific small island developing States. Making our oceans safe, secure and healthy for the benefit of all should be a major focus of the international community and of the Security Council.

This debate reflects a timely and a very welcome shift in rebalancing the focus of the Security Council. Fiji warmly welcomes this shift. Fiji and the Pacific have a very special interest in this debate. Small States of the Pacific are most exposed to, and suffer the most substantially from, growing maritime insecurity. That is why, for Fiji, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has been so crucial. As the constitution of the sea, it provides the bedrock and the framework for the settlement of maritime conflicts and disputes. We now look to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change with an equal measure of hope.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and maritime security are intrinsically linked. The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda are aimed at achieving sustainable development and, through that, building peace and reducing opportunities for conflict. A sustainable blue economy is a critical part of that effort.

Both the Blue Pacific and the oceans are increasingly a theatre for illegal and organized criminal activities. It is poignant that the Security Council debate on maritime security is being held on the same day as the release of the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the physical science basis of its sixth assessment. Fiji and Pacific small island States have informed the Council about the impact of global warming on fisheries and fisheries stocks in the small States of the Pacific.

The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released today signals a more dire and catastrophic future for Fiji and the small developing island States of the Pacific. The combined impacts of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and climate change-induced fisheries migration are drivers of significant economic insecurity for so many communities and countries who rely on tuna and fisheries for their survival. Stable economies and stable coastal States are a prerequisite for an open and secure Blue Pacific.

Fiji would like to highlight the following.

International laws are important for governing the use of the oceans. These laws protect the national interests of all States, the sustainable use of marine resources and the health of the maritime environment and marine life, and they support free and open sea lanes for global trade and travel.

The laws also provide a framework to deter and defeat criminal activities in the maritime domain. These activities range from piracy, armed robbery at sea, drug and arms trafficking, pollution, human trafficking and Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Observing the obligations under these international laws is important to international peace and security.

The ocean is a superhighway without physical borders. The sharing of information, effective monitoring, and coordination of responses over the huge expanse of ocean is critical. These are the major challenges that Fiji and other small island States face. We hope that this meeting leads to better pathways for information sharing and exchange and to more coordinated efforts on surveillance and policing across the Blue Pacific.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, criminal activities on the high sea, and responding to pollution and forced labour are a strain on the maritime surveillance capacities of small States. I thank our regional partners, Australia, New Zealand, France, the United States of America and other countries, for the support that they provide for maritime surveillance in Fiji and across Pacific small island developing States. But the strain on resources and capacity arising from the multidimensional pressures on maritime security is heavy. These strains are intensifying, and they are a growing burden that small States can ill afford.

International and regional security cooperation is crucial to building capacity, sharing information and collaborating on monitoring and enforcement. Regional organizations play an essential role in coordinating regional efforts.

In 2018, the Pacific islands agreed to the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, recognizing the multidimensional nature of security. The Pacific islands have identified climate change as the “single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific”.

Climate change is creating a cycle of destruction, severe environmental conditions and displacement. Climate catastrophes like super-cyclones, major floods and prolonged droughts are increasing in frequency and intensity. Sea level rise is causing the loss of land in island and coastal communities and worsening food and water security. These have caused economic hardships and are driving the relocation of communities and the possible mass migrations of communities in future. They will overwhelm our communities and Governments’ ability to cope. They are a catalyst for instability.

Maritime security is critical to the development of Fiji and the Pacific’s sustainable blue economy. As an island nation, our identity and well-being are closely tied to the health of the ocean. When the health of the ocean and its marine life is being endangered so catastrophically, our efforts to develop a sustainable blue economy are irreparably harmed.

The ocean is not a dumping ground. Reducing pollution from shipping, reducing plastic and eliminating nuclear pollution are important to a healthy ocean and its ecosystems. The scale and extent of these threats now require a global solution.

The international Agreement on port State measures is aimed at deterring, preventing, and eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. States are encouraged to become parties to this Agreement, which will assist in reducing global illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and its negative impact on maritime security.

Fiji proposes that maritime security be included as an annual agenda item by the Security Council. A greater focus by the Council on maritime security can promote better compliance with international maritime laws, promote transparency on the high seas and support confidence-building measures where disagreements exist. Coherence of effort by the United Nations system and the international community on the maritime domain will have a positive impact on regional and global maritime security. Today’s Council debate is a helpful start, but it is a small step.

Fiji recently launched its first national ocean policy. The policy aims to integrate all action of the government system and civil society. Sustainable management of the ocean and marine resources is the key to sustainable development for Fiji and small island States and to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. These are key imperatives to building and sustaining peace in our communities.

Annex XXIX

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations

The international rules-based order determines our co-existence everywhere – on land, in space, in the cyberworld and at sea.

Unfortunately, this order has been exposed to tangible pressure. We need to defend and preserve it more than ever.

The integrity of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, which sets out the legal framework that governs all activities in the oceans and seas, needs to be maintained in particular.

With our contribution to the Group of Friends of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, we underline the importance of the Convention as “a constitution for the seas”.

Germany calls on all States to reaffirm their commitment to the freedoms of the high sea, in particular the freedom of navigation and overflight, and to the right of innocent passage enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Moreover, Germany remains firmly committed to the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including through the compulsory procedures provided therein. Advisory opinions by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea can also contribute to strengthening the law of the sea.

Among the current challenges to maritime order and international security, piracy, armed robbery at sea and other illicit and illegal activities at sea remain a source of great concern. Maritime threats such as piracy not only endanger ships and their crews but also challenge the freedoms of the seas. Therefore, Germany is taking an active stance to combat piracy.

On 1 August 2021, Germany joined and is now a proud member of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia.

Germany supports European Union maritime missions and operation as further essential tools to preserve the international rules-based order that aim to prevent the trade in illegal goods, to monitor United Nations sanctions and to protect World Food Programme deliveries.

The Indo-Pacific is, in this context, crucial: that is why the German frigate “Bayern” set sail on 2 August 2021 with the task of assisting in upholding international law and strengthening security in the Indo-Pacific alongside our partners. The frigate will join the maritime monitoring of United Nations sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, perform joint exercises with partners in the Indo-Pacific and cross the South China Sea.

This mission is part of greater maritime cooperation and the expansion of Germany’s involvement in the region, including through the European Union’s strategic partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

We favour increased involvement of European Union member States in the Indo-Pacific, where the coordinated maritime presences concept created as a framework for strengthening maritime security in a designated maritime area could usefully be applied.

Climate change and environmental degradation also require an urgent collective response. They are not only existential threats to humanity, biodiversity and healthy oceans, they also have increasing implications for global peace and international stability, including maritime security. The high seas must be considered as a global public good which provides climate stabilization, food, jobs and other crucial benefits for humanity and the global ecosystem.

More than ever, it is necessary to conclude an ambitious international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This remains a political priority for us.

Annex XXX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, Harold Adlai Agyeman**

We welcome this high-level open debate and believe that its focus on the theme “Enhancing maritime security: a case for international cooperation” is timely and will go a long way to re-igniting multilateral engagement in addressing the present concern that the maritime situation poses for the maintenance of international peace and security. We align ourselves with the joint statement submitted on behalf of the members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic by Brazil.

Multilateralism remains pivotal to resolving the global challenges of our time, and maritime security is no exception. In this connection, Ghana recalls Security Council resolutions [2018 \(2011\)](#) and [2039 \(2012\)](#), which encouraged Member States in West and Central Africa and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to develop a regional anti-piracy strategy, in cooperation with the African Union, to deal with maritime crime. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in providing capacity-building to Member States has proven useful and needs to be further encouraged. We also acknowledge the contribution of UNODC in strengthening the legal department of the Yaoundé-based Interregional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of the Regional Strategy for Maritime Safety and Security in Central and West Africa) towards the implementation of the regional strategy in the Gulf of Guinea.

Undoubtedly, criminal activities at sea are an antipathy to the development of a sustainable ocean economy, which, if properly managed, has the potential to lift several million people out of poverty and into inclusive growth and prosperity, as envisaged by Sustainable Development Goal 14. Ghana is therefore pleased with the focus of the debate and the presidential statement, which, we believe, underpins multilateral efforts in enhancing maritime safety and security. While welcoming the presidential statement, Ghana shares the view that there is a need to place more focus on regional arrangements and initiatives aimed at addressing maritime crime. These regional arrangements, such as the Yaoundé maritime security architecture and other stakeholder initiatives like the European Union coordinated maritime presence in the Gulf of Guinea and the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, just to mention a few, are germane to achieving meaningful progress on the enhancement of maritime security.

In spite of the important role of the international community in enhancing maritime security, Ghana remains concerned about the upsurge in maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The Gulf represents about 25 per cent of African maritime traffic and nearly 20 per cent of commercial sea ports. With proven hydrocarbon, mineral and fisheries resources, the maritime space is witnessing growing interest in the development of ocean resources, including those in territorial waters as well as the resources of the high seas and the seabed. However, the economic potential in the Gulf is threatened by the rise in maritime crime. For example, in 2020, out of 135 maritime kidnappings, 130 such incidents of sailors and crew taken hostage occurred in the Gulf. Also, in the first quarter of 2021 alone, as reported by the International Maritime Bureau, of the 38 reported maritime incidents globally, 43 per cent were recorded in the Gulf, in comparison with 47 recorded incidents for the same quarter in 2020. Despite the drop in quarterly trends this year, there is a clear indication that the use of violence as an instrument for perpetrating piracy and related maritime crimes has been on the increase. The growing number of armed attacks against vessels

such as petroleum and chemical tankers is reflected in the number of kidnapped crew members.

The rise in maritime crime can be attributed to a number of factors, including legal and jurisdictional weaknesses, conflict and disorder, underfunded law enforcement, inadequate maritime capabilities and the lack of economic opportunities.

Although data is difficult to come by, the negative impact of maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea and the world at large is enormous. Industry experts suggest that, in 2017, the direct cost of piracy was in the region of \$818.1 million. When the risk of piracy is programmed into mitigation costs in the form of insurance, its impact on the economies of coastal and landlocked countries becomes amplified and adverse. The costs are even higher when illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which is estimated at some \$1.5 billion, is added. The illicit funds that maritime bandits acquire, in particular through the thriving black market on petroleum products, has enabled them to equip and develop the capability to attack vessels further afield, on the high seas.

Furthermore, maritime crime poses a threat to the humanitarian situation in the region, since it affects the delivery of vital humanitarian assistance which is transported by sea. Currently, over 20 million people in the region are in need of humanitarian assistance to address food insecurity, among other factors. On the whole, intra-African trade, which is a key objective of the integration agenda of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Continental Free Trade Area, is adversely affected, as the activities of these pirates threaten the free movement of goods and services.

As may be clear by now, the issue of maritime security is a top priority for West Africa. At the fiftieth ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held in Accra on 19 June 2021, the Authority expressed worry about maritime security in the region and reiterated its call on its Member countries to fully implement the measures adopted at the national, regional and continental levels to ensure maritime security and safety in the Gulf of Guinea. It directed the President of the ECOWAS Commission to take appropriate measures, in consultation with Member countries, to fully operationalize the ECOWAS maritime security architecture. As the current Chair of ECOWAS, Ghana is committed to cooperating with all partners at the multilateral level to help implement the maritime strategy for improved maritime security in the region.

Recent developments in the maritime space also show clearly that there is a need to close the gap between policy intentions and implementation outcomes. Some coastal States continue to require strong support in developing naval capacity, retooling maritime equipment and funding naval operational activities. We therefore emphasize the importance of strengthening regional arrangements in dealing with these challenges. Within the West Africa region, Ghana believes that the Code of Conduct Concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships and Maritime Activities in West and Central Africa, signed in 2013, continues to be the most viable framework in responding to the menace of piracy and maritime robberies. More support, including financial support, is therefore required for the implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct.

At the national level, maritime security remains a priority for the Government of Ghana. As a coastal State, Ghana is taking all required steps to modernize its naval vessels and strengthen the legal regime relating to maritime crimes. It will continue to do so and to support, within its capacity, similar efforts by neighbouring coastal States. To further demonstrate our commitment in dealing with the issue, Ghana is set to endorse a comprehensive national integrated maritime strategy this year. The

strategy seeks to improve interagency cooperation and thereby boost collaboration among land, sea and air forces and key stakeholders in the country.

At this juncture, Ghana acknowledges the role of stakeholders in combating maritime crimes in the region, including the European Union for establishing a maritime security policy for the Gulf of Guinea and the efforts being made to implement it. We encourage the strengthening of such partnerships as well as the initiative by the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea. We also recognize the Obangame Express, the largest multinational maritime exercise in West Africa for security personnel, under the auspices of the United States Africa Command initiative. The initiative seeks to improve regional cooperation, maritime domain awareness and tactical interdiction expertise in order to enhance the collective capabilities of Gulf of Guinea and West African nations to counter sea-based illicit activity. These initiatives, which complement interventions by other key stakeholders such as the Peacebuilding Commission, UNODC and UNOWAS, to mention but a few, are critical and should be encouraged.

Ghana recommends the urgent enhancement of technical assistance and capacity-building at the national and regional levels to help deal with challenges of maritime security. Also, joint and coordinated operational training needs to be enhanced to improve interoperability on the basis of harmonized procedures. The development of maritime intelligence and the effective and timely sharing of such intelligence continues to be necessary to enhance maritime safety. We further wish to stress the importance of strengthening regional arrangements to help enhance maritime security, including the operationalization of the interregional coordination centres in the Gulf of Guinea as well as the creation of the maritime zonal centres in the region under the auspices of the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centres.

Ghana shares the view that a whole-of-society approach is required in order to sustain efforts in dealing with maritime security. To this end, we need to explore more ways to enhance channels of communication between Governments and the private sector on maritime security. In addition, we support the call for increased investment to help improve data collection, research and analysis, as well as judicial procedures, pertaining to maritime security. Even though the incidents of piracy and maritime robberies take place on the seas, it is on land that such illicit gains are hidden and used. Urgent measures are therefore needed for enhancing national legislations, strengthening criminal investigations and vigorously prosecuting cases.

In conclusion, Ghana once again commends India for organizing a debate on this very important topic. We assure you of our commitment, as the current Chair of ECOWAS, to deepening cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and our regional group on enhancing maritime safety and security. We must therefore work together to combat crime at sea and prevent the development of any convergence of interests, and intent, between the bandits at sea and their land-based counterparts.

Annex XXXI**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations**

While fully aligning itself with the statement submitted by the European Union, Greece would like to share some additional remarks.

Greece is a country with strong maritime interests owing to its long continental and insular coastline and the size of its merchant fleet. For this reason, the maintenance of peace, stability and security on the seas and oceans; freedom of navigation; the preservation of the marine environment and its natural resources (living and non-living); the protection of human life at sea; the protection of critical maritime routes and infrastructure; and the safety and security of ships and the well-being of people living in coastal areas are all issues of absolute priority. Being the key enabler of flourishing maritime activities, security at sea is also the essential prerequisite for blue growth.

Greece is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and to all major international conventions dealing with maritime crime, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, as well as global counter-terrorism instruments. In this capacity, we strongly support enhanced cooperation between the parties to these Conventions in order to effectively address maritime crime in all its facets. Greece would also like to underline the importance of the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions by all United Nations Member States.

Greece attaches great importance to the implementation of the SOLAS Convention and its International Ship and Port Facility code, as well as the SUA Convention and the Protocols thereto. Governance-wise, Greece strongly supports the role and work of the International Maritime Organization in delivering robust security-related policies and normative instruments and enhancing the capabilities of States through multilateral collaboration and technical cooperation.

Greece is involved in and committed to relevant international operations and initiatives, such as Operation Sea Guardian and Aegean Sea Activity of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Atalanta and IRINI operations of the European Union Naval Force, the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, the Montreux Document Forum and, hopefully soon, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, which aim to address, in full respect of international law, piracy and other maritime security challenges. We also consider their further promotion and the active involvement of all interested States as an important means of eradicating maritime crime. Moreover, Greece provides training in the field of maritime security at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre in Crete.

The interconnection of the various challenges and the different forms of maritime crime necessitate an integrated and holistic approach towards maritime security. For example, different agencies collect incredibly useful surface and satellite surveillance information, but a “need-to-share” attitude has not yet been attained. To this end, the development of mechanisms for ever-improving information exchange is essential in order to further enhance maritime situational awareness.

The international community has a good rule-making record and enhanced maritime capabilities. As a result, security at sea has improved significantly over the years. However, there is no room for complacency, given that new challenges also emerge – cyberthreats being the most prominent example – which create important risks in the maritime domain. Therefore, and since there is a case for enhanced

maritime security, we should start from how we can better implement, in good faith and together, our maritime *acquis*. Then, where implementation gaps are identified, multilateral initiatives and mechanisms will provide the appropriate cooperation channels.

As a final note, Greece would like to stress that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea constitutes the appropriate legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas are carried out and provides the necessary legal certainty to address existing and emerging threats to maritime security.

Annex XXXII**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

This open debate is of singular relevance, given that maritime security is an issue of the global maritime sector where international law and national laws are both applicable. It is a global effort to govern the oceans under the rule of law. In doing so, transport, infrastructure, the environment and marine resources will be protected and used sustainably. Our delegation is thus grateful to the Indian Presidency for holding this debate.

Guatemala wishes to underscore the need to promote a security policy in the maritime space to ensure freedom of navigation, protection of maritime trade and human life at sea, prevention and combating criminal activity and terrorism in that environment, protection and conservation of the coastlines, the environment and marine resources, and prevention and response to disasters or accidents at sea.

My delegation believes that multilateral cooperation is of particular relevance to the maintenance of maritime security. For this purpose, technical assistance and capacity-building measures at the national, regional and global levels are necessary elements that help to achieve that objective. As an example, we wish to highlight the work of the Interamerican Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States, which has held various expert meetings on maritime drug trafficking, forming the basis for discussions on safety at sea and providing for the exchange of good practices among States.

At the same time, Guatemala also believes that the international legal regime regulating activities in the oceans is the foundation that guides the behaviour of States on the seas, guarantees continuity of the rule-based international order and provides sustainable protection for marine and coastal ecosystems. Thus, we are convinced that the existing conventions, instruments, processes and initiatives for the oceans related to the law of the sea help to create optimum results for the oceans, contribute to the development of States and should be applied in a way that benefits humanity as a whole.

Considering that its scope of application covers 70 per cent of the Earth's surface, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is a key instrument for the maintenance of peace, cooperation and good relations among States through the definition of maritime zones, navigation rights, environmental protection and its conflict resolution mechanism.

With regard to the protection of the environment and marine resources, we must highlight the importance we attach to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on marine resources. Guatemala recognizes the efforts to negotiate a legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. We consider the negotiation of its content to be of the utmost importance, as it will determine the legacy we leave future generations. Thus, we emphasize the need to enhance the exchange of scientific knowledge, capacity building and transfer of marine technology, especially for developing countries, because they are decisive for effective implementation of its provisions and can in turn contribute to the implementation of other conventions, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Annex XXXIII

Statement by the Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations, Mohammad Kurniadi Koba

With respect to today’s debate, my delegation wishes to highlight three points.

First is the importance of upholding the rule of law in preserving maritime security.

Given the variety of dangers that occur in relation to, and affect, the seas, including transnational crimes, environmental degradation and territorial disputes, we are of the view that the international community and all stakeholders must respond by upholding international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

To that end, we wish to highlight the different types of jurisdictions, as prescribed by international law, namely coastal State, flag State and port State, as the ultimate approach in enforcing the various laws and regulations on maritime security.

Whilst Indonesia acknowledges that a successful response to maritime threats requires strong international cooperation, we should respect the tenet and application of those types of jurisdictions in order to avoid disorder at sea.

Thus, it is incumbent upon the international community to bolster its collaboration in order to reinforce States’ capabilities through, inter alia, the exchange of information and intelligence, technical assistance and support, and the nurturing of the network of maritime law enforcers.

Second, regional mechanisms are the first responders to maritime threats.

Abundant forms of maritime cooperation and mechanisms exist in South-East Asia. For instance, the Malacca Strait patrols by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore; the trilateral patrol by Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines in the Sulu Sea; and the Indonesia-India-coordinated naval patrol in the Indian Ocean region since 2002.

We also have been conducting various regional discourses on maritime security under the auspices of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) maritime forum, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Indian Ocean Rim Association and others.

Furthermore, we believe that the interregional coordination should be carried out to strengthen measures on maritime security.

In this respect, we wish to stress the initiative of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which aims to enhance the cooperative mechanism of ASEAN with other regional mechanisms, and to promote the principles of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, respect for international law and ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific region.

Third, more attention should be brought to addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Such fishing is one of the most pressing maritime security threats of our time.

The detrimental effects of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing are further exacerbated by the involvement of organized criminal groups that operate transnationally to obtain illicit proceeds through means such as the smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and illicit drug trafficking.

Therefore, it is pertinent to acknowledge the transnational organized crime dimension of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and to tackle the issue under

relevant suppression conventions such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

To conclude, we need to ensure that the seas and oceans remain peaceful and safe for a global ecosystem of peace, stability and prosperity to come about.

To this end, Indonesia stands ready to work together with the international community in strengthening cooperation on maritime security.

Annex XXXIV**Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Zahra Ershadi**

According to the World Bank Group, over 80 per cent of international trade is transported by sea, and the volume of seaborne trade is expected to double by 2030 and quadruple by 2050. These figures alone prove the importance of the oceans and seas in the global economy and confirm the vital importance of, and the need for, the preservation of maritime security as a global common good.

Enjoying the longest coasts in such strategically important waterways as the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz as well as high maritime shipping capacity, and also as an important oil- and gas-producing country, the Islamic Republic of Iran is highly interested in, and attaches great importance to, maritime security.

Maritime security is key in ensuring freedom of navigation, facilitating international communication and promoting peaceful uses of the seas and oceans and their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the preservation of the marine environment, as well as promoting the economic and social advancement of all peoples and the strengthening of peace, security, cooperation and friendly relations among all nations.

As a basic principle, the primary responsibility for ensuring maritime security, including by effectively combating maritime crimes, notably piracy and armed robbery at sea, rests with individual States, consistent with their relevant obligations under international law. When needed, efforts to counter maritime crimes may be complemented, at the regional level, by the cooperation and partnership of States of the region concerned, and on the high seas, through international cooperation.

Nevertheless, all such activities must be conducted in full conformity with the basic principles of international law, in particular with full respect for the sovereignty of States and refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States.

While there is a comprehensive set of statutory regulations, as well as considerable capacity in combating maritime crimes, the imposition of unilateral coercive measures – which is contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations – has hampered our access to new technologies and equipment commensurate with the new trends and the level of advancement of criminal activities.

Despite that, and fully committed to its relevant international obligations, the Islamic Republic of Iran has continued to significantly contribute to the promotion of maritime security, including, *inter alia*, by combating maritime crimes, in particular piracy.

It has now been well over a decade that the naval forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran have been deployed in the Indian Ocean and the adjacent areas in support of international efforts to combat piracy therein. This has repeatedly been acknowledged by the Secretary-General in his relevant reports and commended by the Security Council in its numerous resolutions.

Likewise, the sixth meeting of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium – comprising 24 Member States and seeking to enhance maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral States of the Indian Ocean – was held from 22 to 25 April 2018 in Tehran. During its chairmanship of the Symposium and its working group on maritime security between 2018 to 2021, our Navy prepared the draft Symposium maritime

security guidelines and, in June and November 2019, held two planning conferences in Bandar Abbas for the preparation of the Symposium maritime exercise in 2020.

In addition, according to a decision of the seventh meeting of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium in July 2021, a regional maritime security centre will be launched in Iran's Chabahar port for the Indian Ocean rim countries, enabling the regional States to dispatch their representatives to the centre and exchange information aimed at ensuring maritime security.

Regarding the politically motivated statements made by the United States and the United Kingdom in this meeting against Iran concerning the *Mercer Street* vessel incident, I reiterate, once again, our firm rejection of these unsubstantiated allegations.

The massive presence of the military forces of these countries, including in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, has always been the main source of regional insecurity and instability, and fabrications and false-flag operations, including by Israel, have been used to justify such unwarranted presences or to invade regional countries. Very recently, one of the senior military sources of these countries said that "everything points to the drone being launched from Yemen", and afterwards, their special forces were dispatched to Yemen to apparently "hunt down terrorists behind the drone attack". Everything is quite telling and clear. This also proves that these countries have not learned from their failures in the aggression against the Yemeni people.

All such allegations are the repetition of fabrications pumped to media by the Israeli regime immediately after that incident. There is no irrefutable, verifiable and conclusive evidence to substantiate these grave accusations. What they try to portray as definite hard evidence is nothing but certain photos which prove nothing.

Such accusations can in no way whitewash the terrorist acts of the Israeli regime against commercial navigation. In less than just two years, this regime has attacked over 10 commercial vessels carrying either oil or humanitarian goods in regional seas. Similarly, Israel's hue and cry about the *Mercer Street* incident cannot deflect attention from the other destabilizing activities and adventurism of the Israeli regime in the region. In addition to its policy of deception and fabrication, it is an open secret that Israel is the master in conducting false-flag operations.

Rather than playing the victim and demonizing others, the Israeli regime must immediately stop all its irresponsible policies, aggressions and crimes, as well as unlawful and inhumane practices, which have long been the main source of threat, instability and insecurity in such a volatile region as the Middle East, and beyond.

Moreover, the Security Council must live up to its Charter-mandated responsibilities, put an end to its longstanding inaction and procrastination with respect to the systematic violation of international law by the Israeli regime and its criminal and destabilizing activities, and hold that regime accountable for all its unlawful practices, which include committing four core international crimes.

The Security Council must also remain fully vigilant and avoid being trapped by the fabrications of the Israeli regime – which, as usual, are blindly supported by certain Western countries in the Council; those who have prevented the Council, in the past seven decades, from taking any action against the criminal acts of the Israeli regime, emboldening it to commit, with total impunity, more crimes with more brutality.

In conclusion, I reiterate the principled policy and resolute determination of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as in the past, in maintaining and promoting maritime security in the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of

Oman, as well as contributing to maritime security, ensuring freedom of navigation and combating maritime crimes, including piracy in the Indian Ocean and the adjacent areas. We also stand ready to actively and constructively cooperate with the littoral States of the aforementioned areas to promote regional peace and security.

Annex XXXV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan**

At the outset, I wish to thank the Government of India for convening this critical debate, which rightfully brings to the fore the centrality of maritime security for safeguarding common prosperity and international peace and security interests. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has most certainly underlined the importance of maritime security and transport, which constitutes an essential sector for the lives of all the peoples of the world.

This debate and the call for enhanced international cooperation in this domain is certainly not a theoretical or academic exercise. Indeed, this important discussion, undertaken by the international body tasked with the protection of global peace and security, could not be more timely. In recent days and months, we have witnessed a spate of murderous attacks and hijacking attempts by the Iranian regime against commercial vessels in the Gulf region. These acts of maritime terrorism have led, inter alia, to the murder of two innocent civilians, one a United Kingdom citizen, the other a Romanian citizen. They have disrupted international trade in a maritime artery vital to international commerce, at a time when the entire world is still battling a global pandemic. And they have threatened both regional and international peace and security. This latest onslaught of attacks is nothing new. For months, we have witnessed Iran and its proxies brazenly attacking innocent commercial ships and threatening maritime security in a most volatile region and at a most precarious time in world history. And with the hardliner, Ebrahim Raisi – otherwise known as the “Butcher of Tehran” for having massacred his own people in cold blood – now at the helm in Iran, we can expect this worrisome and dangerous trend to continue and even intensify.

About 20 years ago, when the scourge of piracy in the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea threatened global shipping and transportation, the international community did not sit idly by. Indeed, this august forum took action and adopted critical international resolutions that were coupled with concrete action taken by various coalitions, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union Naval Force. This timely and decisive action by the Security Council and other global actors effected a palpable reduction in incidents of piracy off the coast of Africa, which by now have all but stopped.

Today, a new threat has emerged, which similarly threatens maritime security and commerce on a global scale. The time is now for the Security Council to once again step up to the plate and take decisive action in the wake of increasingly brazen and murderous attacks by Iran and its proxies in the Gulf region and beyond.

While the recently adopted United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy addressed, in general terms, the importance of maritime security and the need to prevent maritime terrorism, we call upon the Security Council to act urgently and take specific and decisive action to address this clear upswing in malign activities undertaken by the Iranian regime and its proxies in the maritime arena and beyond. The international community must unequivocally condemn and sanction Iran for its recent actions at sea and hold the regime accountable for this onslaught of attacks while creating effective mechanisms to stop any further attacks and possible escalation. Only in this way can we meaningfully enhance maritime security together as a global community and stop Iran before it is too late.

Annex XXXVI

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Italy thanks the Government of India for organizing this open debate and aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

The transnational character of maritime crime and threats to maritime security requires a concerted action by the international community, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and with the freedom of navigation. International and regional cooperation are indispensable in tackling the emerging challenges on the high seas in all its multiple dimensions, including trafficking in persons, weapons, drugs and cultural artefacts. Providing security at sea also means safeguarding human rights, especially of the most vulnerable people, such as women and children, often victims of human trafficking.

Maritime security is a priority for Italy, which deems it essential to guarantee freedom of navigation along sea routes, respect for the basic principles of maritime passage, security and safety, and the protection of the oceans. In order to ensure maritime security and protect these principles, Italy actively participates in important naval operations. In the Mediterranean, for example, Italy represents one the largest contributors to Operation “Irinì” of the European Union Naval Force, currently providing it with the flagship ITS San Marco. The mission, under the leadership of Admiral Agostini, is the only actor mandated, by Security Council resolution [2292 \(2016\)](#), to implement the arms embargo on Libya established by Security Council resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#). In the Horn of Africa, we have been participating in the counterpiracy operation “Atalanta” of the European Union Naval Force since its inception, continuously providing one or two naval assets, including the flagship. In the Gulf of Guinea, in line with Italy’s increasing investment in maritime security in the region, Italy committed highly performing naval units in an anti-piracy eight-month per year campaign, including joint maritime security and maritime domain awareness patrol activities with European and regional navies, as well as capacity-building involving coastal States.

Italy is also deeply involved in fostering security through proactive support to the development of related capabilities of partner countries, in particular in Africa. Italy is therefore conducting capacity-building and cooperation programmes with several States. In many cases, there is indeed a clear need for comprehensive capacity-building assistance in areas such as maritime governance, coast guard functions, disaster relief, maritime search and rescue, and the sharing and integration of maritime information. At the same time, efforts are also required to improve legislative, judicial and prosecutorial capacities.

However, the root causes of piracy and other maritime crimes lie on land, and the development of a sustainable maritime economy should be an essential part of the international efforts aimed at countering and effectively eliminating them. In particular, ocean health and productivity need to be restored and maintained, so that oceans and their ecosystem services can be available to current and future generations and support sustainable development, avoiding the resurgence of the root causes of instability at sea. In this regard, Italy is actively promoting a more sustainable approach to the use of marine resources in order to protect marine biodiversity and combat pollution. More broadly, Italy is taking action at the national, European and international levels to fight climate change and reduce the emissions levels that are causing the increase in temperatures and the acidification of oceans.

In conclusion, Italy is fully committed to working together with its partners in fighting transnational maritime crime and tackling the root causes of these crimes. At

the same time, Italy believes in the importance of fully respecting and encouraging local ownership. In this spirit, Italy stands ready to improve information-sharing, increase legal cooperation and cooperate on institution and capacity-building.

Annex XXXVII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ishikane Kimihiro**

I would like to welcome India's initiative in convening this historic Security Council meeting to discuss the issue of maritime security for the first time. This open debate is an important and necessary reminder to the Council of how crucial it is to maintain international peace and security at sea.

As an island nation, Japan is committed to a free, open and secure maritime space, which provides an essential basis for the beneficial and peaceful uses of the oceans for everyone. With this conviction, Japan has strived to contribute to maritime security in close cooperation with our fellow Member States.

In the area of maritime crime, one of the notable initiatives that Japan proposed is the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia and its Information Sharing Centre, which have proven to be useful tools in tackling piracy and sea robbery in Asia. Capacity-building is essential in promoting the safety and security of the maritime domain. Japan is proud to have provided vessels and equipment to countries in need in the Asian region and beyond and to have sent out its experts around the globe, including to the Global Maritime Crime Programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Our efforts extend to supporting the law enforcement and justice sectors in countries such as those off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Guinea. Japan's fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing also includes keen support to developing countries.

Japan welcomes the recent establishment of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, whose stated objectives include the "peaceful settlement of maritime disputes based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea". This exemplifies the widely shared recognition of the critical importance of the rule of law at sea.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is indeed key to preventing and addressing threats to international peace and security concerning the maritime domain and needs to be fully upheld, regardless of the size of a nation. Unilateral attempts by force or coercion to change the status quo and complicate or negatively affect maritime security and safety should be strongly opposed.

Let me highlight a few points in this context for the attention of the Council.

- First, a maritime order, which serves as a basis for maritime security, should be predictable for all Member States and, therefore, should be based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is also referred to as "the constitution of the oceans".
- Second, given the universality and comprehensiveness of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, all maritime rights and claims must be based on its relevant provisions. It is also critical to respect the fundamental principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including freedom of navigation and overflight.
- Lastly, all maritime disputes need to be peacefully resolved in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including through final decisions of international courts or tribunals. We need to be reminded once again that the award of the arbitral tribunal related to the South China Sea is final and legally binding.

In concluding, allow me to reiterate Japan's firm belief that the oceans must be free, open and secure, on the basis of the rule of law. Japan is committed to promoting international cooperation in its immediate region and beyond and is ready to further contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security at sea.

Annex XXXVIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations, Syed Mohamad Hasrin Aidid**

As a maritime nation straddling the strategic waterways of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, and as a littoral State to the Straits of Malacca, an important strait used in international navigation, Malaysia places great importance on, and is committed to, ensuring that its maritime area is safe and secure for navigation, maritime-borne international trade and other ocean-related economic uses.

Coastal States, including Malaysia, face numerous challenges in ensuring the security and safety of their maritime areas, in the form of terrorism, piracy and armed robbery, smuggling, trafficking, illegal dumping, pollution, environmental degradation and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Malaysia, in this regard, has undertaken comprehensive efforts to safeguard its sovereignty, sovereign rights and national interests, including the safety and security of its maritime zones. At the same time, Malaysia recognizes that efforts to address these challenges would be much more effective through regional and international cooperation alongside our neighbours and other partners.

We are cognizant that the key factors in addressing maritime security issues would include a coastal State's capacity and capability. Of course, capacities and capabilities would differ from one coastal State to another. This is where capacity-building and technical assistance from regional and international partners would be very much welcomed. Nevertheless, it is important to be mindful that such assistance does not impinge upon the sovereignty of the coastal State. The importance of international cooperation in maritime security has been highlighted by international action and measures to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of Somalia, as mandated by the various Security Council resolutions.

Malaysia continues to undertake efforts to secure the safety and security of its maritime zones in order to safeguard its national interests, as well as to ensure safe passage for international shipping. Malaysia is of the view that close cooperation among States at the bilateral, regional and international levels, in particular on the exchange of information and intelligence, is crucial in addressing and combating piracy.

At the regional level, Malaysia has worked together with its littoral neighbours through the Cooperative Mechanism for the Straits of Malacca and Singapore to ensure the safety of navigation in one of the world's busiest straits used for international navigation. The Cooperative Mechanism has been widely recognised as a successful model of cooperation among littoral States, as encouraged by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982. It also provides a platform for other stakeholders, including user States and the shipping industry, to engage in and contribute towards efforts to maintain and enhance the safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment in the Straits.

To enhance maritime security in the Straits of Malacca, Malaysia, alongside Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand, established the Malacca Straits coordinated patrols, which consist of two components – the Malacca Straits sea patrol and the eye-in-the-sky air patrols. These provide comprehensive aerial and maritime surveillance to ensure maritime security in the Straits.

In 2016, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines established a trilateral cooperative arrangement to strengthen maritime security in the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas. The arrangement framework is a testament to the shared commitment of the

three countries in addressing the growing security challenges, in particular armed robbery of ships and kidnapping for ransom in the maritime areas of common concern. Activities implemented under the framework include trilateral maritime patrols (air and sea), the rendering of immediate assistance and the establishment of national focal points to facilitate the timely sharing of information and intelligence, as well as coordination in the event of emergencies and security threats. The agreement has been successful in its objectives in reducing the number of security incidents in the maritime areas of common concern. Malaysia will continue to demonstrate its strong commitment and adherence to the agreement framework and looks forward to continuing to work together with Indonesia and the Philippines in implementing the agreement framework, including its standard operating procedures.

In its efforts to further enhance maritime security in the region, Malaysia has been participating in various maritime-related programmes and activities led by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Malaysia and Japan co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on international cooperation on maritime domain awareness from 7 to 8 March 2018 in Tokyo. The workshop contributed to deepening participants' understanding of measures for dealing with maritime security challenges effectively through enhanced maritime domain awareness capabilities, with a particular focus on international cooperation. The workshop further provided an opportunity to consider how to promote a global maritime domain awareness network and how it could be used more effectively to support confidence building measures through the ASEAN Regional Forum framework.

Malaysia further believes that cooperation to strengthen maritime domain awareness is important to address these common challenges. Malaysia continues to encourage and promote cooperation related to maritime security and maritime domain awareness, including through various ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN maritime forum and the expanded ASEAN maritime forum.

On a similar note, Australia and Malaysia co-hosted the maritime security and international law seminar of the East Asia Summit from 11–13 February 2019 in Kuala Lumpur. The seminar was aimed at strengthening cooperation among countries participating in the Summit through discussions on best practices in implementing and adhering to international and regional obligations, identifying gaps in existing frameworks and enhancing collaboration in responding to maritime security policy challenges.

Malaysia also recognizes that the establishment of a national maritime single point of contact has the potential to act as a conduit for enhanced maritime security cooperation and coordination at the national and regional levels. In 2018, Malaysia co-hosted, with the United States and Australia, the second ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on national maritime single points of contact, aimed at further developing the maritime single-point-of-contact framework to support cooperation in regional maritime domain awareness and coordinate maritime security cooperation. The idea of single points of contact sets out the premise of a one-stop centre which facilitates the fusion of information among law enforcement agencies.

In conclusion, Malaysia strongly believes that regional and international cooperation is crucial in our efforts to enhance maritime security. We believe that such cooperation should not be limited to the operational aspects but should include capacity-building, training, exchanges or sharing of information and the transfer of technology. In that vein, Malaysia looks forward to working with delegations and welcomes partnerships or collaborations in the respective areas.

Annex XXXIX**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations**

[Original: French]

Allow me first of all to extend to you my warmest congratulations and those of my delegation for your Presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. You can count on the full support of the Kingdom of Morocco for a successful mandate.

I welcome the presence of the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

I would also like to pay tribute to the French presidency of the Council for the month of July.

Maritime security represents a major challenge to international security. It is essential to protect this common rich resource and combat any act that could harm it. Despite the lack of an international definition of the terms “maritime crime” or “maritime security”, however, it is still important to pay special attention to illegal acts committed in or making use of the maritime domain, in particular piracy and armed robbery on the high seas, illicit, unreported and unregulated fishing, trafficking in drugs, arms and persons, as well as damage to the marine environment.

The marine space is by nature shared, where the State has a central role when it comes to security. However, non-State actors are involved in crimes on the high seas. Consequently, an inclusive approach is imperative in order to confront these challenges, which calls for the contribution of coastal States, flag States, marine transport companies, local populations and civil society actors, with full respect for the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

Faced with these threats to maritime security, Governments and international organizations have mobilized to develop common defence strategies. The goal of these initiatives is to strengthen systems to prevent and combat piracy.

Cooperation must be strengthened in order to increase surveillance on the high seas, contribute to data bases, ensure the security of cargos and train Ship Security Assessment instructors. States, the International Maritime Bureau, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the Piracy Reporting Centre, among others, should combine their efforts to confront challenges to maritime security.

A number of coalitions work to ensure safe navigation, including the multinational Combined Task Force ISI, Operation Ocean Shield, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Maritime Piracy Task Force, and the Group of G7 Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++). The role of these coalitions is central to combating marine piracy and improving maritime security.

The Kingdom of Morocco, as a passage point between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa and at the threshold of the Straits of Gibraltar, is a strategic crossroads for international maritime flows. The Kingdom, whose port, Tangier Med, is the largest in Africa, attaches great importance to the security of port infrastructure, especially because it is vital to its economy.

The Kingdom also has the longest coastline in Africa (3,500 km), which requires it to monitor maritime security in all its aspects. The Atlantic coast of Morocco, which lies in the extended sensitive zones of the Gulf of Guinea, requires particular vigilance.

Morocco has made several strategic investments in the Gulf of Guinea, in particular, rehabilitation of the Cocody Bay in Cote d'Ivoire and the gas pipeline project with Nigeria, as part of active and effective South-South cooperation with brotherly African countries, which is a priority of its foreign policy. These projects require a secure maritime environment for their success and sustainability.

Aware of what is at stake, Morocco has developed real operational experience in the area of maritime security, in particular through bilateral cooperation with several countries as well as international and regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

It should be noted that Morocco is active in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, where it participates in an initiative on banning travel by sea of terrorists. Moroccan cooperation with NATO places great importance on the maritime dimension. Morocco also participates as an observer in the meetings of the Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, established in 2013 to assist in the implementation of the Yaounde Architecture for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Morocco is also very active within the international and regional organizations to which it belongs, in particular the International Maritime Organization, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, INTERPOL, the African Union and the World Customs Organization, which have programmes in the area of maritime security, including to combat maritime piracy and trafficking by sea, countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by sea, protection of port infrastructure and combating terrorism.

In addition to international cooperation, regional cooperation is of primary importance. The conclusion of agreements and adoption of treaties provides a promising basis for regional cooperation, in particular 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), the Yaounde Architecture and the African Charter on Maritime Safety and Security and Development (Lome Charter). These instruments have allowed progress in regional maritime security, especially in Africa.

We should also recall that the debate begun by the United Nations in the Security Council in 2012 on security and stability in West Africa led to the adoption of resolution [2039 \(2012\)](#), which encouraged the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to develop a regional strategy, with the support of the United Nations and other partners. Morocco and Togo, non-permanent members of the Security Council and representatives of Africa at the time, had worked to bring this issue before the Council.

The activities of Morocco on the African continent, under the heading of South-South partnership, have built up and reinforced its position, with the aim of contributing to sustainable development, growth and emancipation of its home continent. In that regard, Morocco was the pioneer of two initiatives focused on the Atlantic maritime space, the Geographic Area of Competence of Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation (COMHAFAT) and the Ministerial Conference of African States Bordering the Atlantic.

Lastly, Morocco will continue to strengthen its expertise and cooperate with various actors in prevention, detection and interdiction of illicit flows, safety and security of port infrastructure and exchange of analysis on the status of international and regional maritime security.

Annex XL**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank India for organizing and chairing today's debate. We attach great importance to maritime security and are pleased to see it on today's agenda. The Kingdom of the Netherlands endorses the statement made on behalf of the European Union member States and wishes to emphasize some national elements with regard to maritime security.

Maritime security is of critical importance to help sustain a rules-based order at sea in support of connectivity and a sustainable blue economy. It is a prerequisite for all types of maritime activities, contributing to the economic and social welfare of citizens around the world. It also facilitates the implementation of measures to safeguard the marine environment.

First and foremost, it is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea that sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. It provides a framework for the global governance of the oceans and seas suitable for serving the needs of current and future generations and for the strengthening of international peace and security and friendly relations among all nations. The Kingdom of the Netherlands calls upon all Member States to adhere to the principles of the Convention.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the opportunity to discuss the measures to develop this framework, as mentioned in India's much-valued concept note. A comprehensive approach to maritime security is vital to sustainably safeguard our common prosperity and security interest and to counter the threats and acts, as laid down in the 2008 "Oceans and the Law of the Sea" report by former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. We can only enhance the level of maritime security with a comprehensive approach that also addresses the root causes for maritime crime.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands underlines the need for a solid and common understanding of the risks which impact maritime security as one of the fundamental principles to bolster a comprehensive approach. We believe that only an up-to-date and reliable analysis of these risks can lead to adequate mitigation. Therefore, the Kingdom of the Netherlands promotes a shared approach to maritime security, focused on increasing interoperability and interconnectivity; from civilian to military, and from governmental and non-governmental to commercial. We believe that shared capabilities and instruments for data gathering, integrated analyses and information dissemination could be a great step forward to increase maritime security by improving our shared maritime situational awareness.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands applies, through the efforts of several Ministries, multiple instruments to contribute to an enhanced level of maritime security supporting maritime trade and fishery, the environment and biodiversity, and the enforcement and promotion of the international legal order at sea. The aim is to control crises and combat serious crime, for example by fighting piracy, drug and arms smuggling and human trafficking. We participate in international partnerships, such as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, to exchange information and experiences, and we actively involve our maritime industry partners from the private sector. The private sector can play its part by adhering to international ship and port facility security and by sharing information. As a European Union member State, we promote and support the European Union maritime security strategy, European Union or European-led

maritime missions and operations (such as Atalanta and European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz), and the efforts to enhance maritime domain awareness via the Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean project and the European Union coordinated maritime presences concept. We believe the latter to be a good example of a mechanism for increased collaboration between States to collectively enhance maritime security.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is willing to participate in discussions on how to further enhance a comprehensive approach to maritime security. We would greatly value and appreciate all Member States' participation.

Annex XLI

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations

Oceans provide us with the wealth of resources on which we rely for our survival and development. The economic value of ocean assets is around \$24 trillion.

The report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea indicates that 80 per cent of world trade takes place by sea, which is the main means of international trade and a fundamental driver in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Trade in ocean-based goods and services exports are estimated at \$2.5 trillion.

Enhancing maritime security is therefore essential for international peace and security, interconnectivity, the blue economy and free trade.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships remains a major threat to maritime security.

Transnational criminal groups, such as those in the Gulf of Aden, on the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Guinea, are involved in multiple illegal activities, including drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons, piracy, armed robbery and, in some cases, terrorist activity.

The link between transnational organized crime at sea and the threat that it poses to the stability, security and economies of both coastal and landlocked States is visible and a matter of grave concern.

To meet the challenges posed by this large-scale phenomenon, it is crucial that we develop a robust regulatory framework and a coordinated and comprehensive approach at the national, regional and international levels to address them.

The adoption of resolutions [2383 \(2017\)](#) and [2442 \(2018\)](#) by the Security Council made important contributions to dealing with the challenge of transnational organized crime at sea, specifically off the coast of Somalia and the affected coastal areas in the Gulf of Guinea.

These resolutions, along with other multilateral treaties, embody some of the important steps that the international community should take to prevent and counteract maritime crimes and maintain international peace and security.

Pakistan has a strategic stake in peaceful navigation and security of the Indian Ocean region. Our interests emanate from a coastline over 1,000 km long, an exclusive economic zone of around 290,000 km², Karachi port and the newly built deep sea port of Gwadar.

Pakistan is an important stakeholder in the Indian Ocean security framework, which includes counter-piracy as well as human trafficking and narcotics smuggling.

We are proud that the Pakistan Navy continues to maintain a robust security posture along Pakistan's coast and in the regional seas, in order to prevent nefarious elements from illicit activities in the maritime domain.

The Pakistan Navy has always been appreciated for its efforts to promote peace and security. Among other things, it has been actively participating in the Combined Task Forces 150 and 151 in the larger interest of the international community and regional maritime security.

Since 2013, Pakistan has been operating a joint maritime information coordination centre. It gathers and shares all required information among all the national stakeholders for maritime domain awareness.

Our Navy has also provided valuable assistance on the high seas to vessels in distress, including during anti-piracy operations, and has extended humanitarian assistance to regional countries on several occasions.

Pakistan's Gwadar port occupies a strategic location overlooking the Strait of Hormuz and the north Arabian Sea.

As part of the China-Pakistan economic corridor, the port places Pakistan at a point of convergence, linking active sea lanes to landlocked Central Asian republics for the shipment of oil, coal and agricultural products.

The success of the China-Pakistan economic corridor and the Gwadar port project is linked to the safe and secure maritime environment in the Indian Ocean region in general and the Arabian Sea in particular.

Therefore, keeping the sea lanes of communication open and protecting Pakistan's coast as well as the ports of Karachi, Qasim, Ormara and Gwadar is of the utmost importance to my country.

Accordingly, a special organization known as Task Force 88 has been created and assigned the duty of the seaward security of Gwadar port and the protection of associated sea lanes against both conventional and non-traditional threats.

The Indian Ocean represents an increasingly important avenue for global trade. It hosts international maritime traffic that includes half of the world's containerized cargo, one third of its bulk cargo and two thirds of its oil shipments.

Yet emerging issues, ranging from piracy and territorial water disputes to global environmental pressures on coastal and marine resources, pose considerable challenges for policymakers.

The Indian Ocean offers promising potential for mutual cooperation and collaboration. But geostrategic competition and the pursuit of military dominance by some States have gravely jeopardized that potential.

In particular, India's belligerent and aggressive policies – currently driven by an extremist Hindutva ideology – pose an immediate and pervasive threat to international and regional peace and security.

In pursuance of its hegemonic designs, India has nuclearized the Indian Ocean and continues to induct advanced weapons systems and naval delivery platforms. In the light of these developments, Pakistan will continue to take all necessary measures to maintain full-spectrum deterrence and ensure its national security on land, in the air and at sea.

The international community needs be cognizant of the fact that any military conflict in South Asia could endanger stability in a region that is critical for global trade and global peace and security.

We are also concerned at the politicization of the law of the sea and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea by some Member States in recent years. When it comes to pacific settlement of maritime disputes, we should fully respect efforts made by the countries concerned to resolve these and thus safeguard peace and stability. The countries outside the region should respect the negotiations or the process through which the parties concerned want to resolve such issues.

Pakistan recognizes the importance of safeguarding the world's ocean and international trade through enhanced maritime security.

We are ready to cooperate and collaborate with other friendly nations and partners in the region and around the world to realize this goal for the mutual benefit of all humanity.

Annex XLII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations

As an archipelagic country with over 36,000 km of coastline, the Philippines places paramount importance on maritime security. Our location makes us vulnerable to maritime security challenges, including transnational crimes, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and sea level rise.

Addressing criminal activities on the seas

We are committed to eliminating these threats by enhancing maritime security cooperation on a bilateral, regional and multilateral basis. Our focus is on border management and security to combat transnational crimes. Enhanced coordination and information-sharing is also crucial to deny criminals corridors to successfully conduct their nefarious activities.

Last year, we joined Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and INTERPOL in Operation “Maharlika III”, simultaneous law enforcement and border control actions along known terrorist and criminal transit routes in Southeast Asia.

This year, we signed the memorandum of understanding on the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme. With a focus on maritime border security, it will build our capacities on addressing security threats in air and maritime environments and on information exchange and enable closer engagement with the private sector, including the maritime transport industry.

At the regional level, we co-chaired the second Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum workshop on aviation security and information-sharing, highlighting countering terrorist travel and privacy and data protection.

We continue to leverage technology for maritime domain awareness. Our National Coast Watch Centre utilizes automatic identification system, vessel monitoring system, and vessel traffic services technologies. We ask that technology and countermeasures be made available to us through technology transfer and capacity-building activities.

We also support the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia.

Maritime security and the marine environment

The nexus between maritime security and the state of the marine environment generates tensions that can negatively impact the latter. As we have seen from the second World Ocean Assessment, geopolitical instabilities and regional disputes impede the implementation of global and regional agreements for the sustainable use of the oceans. We therefore urge compliance in good faith with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including its provisions on the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Upholding the rule of law in the world’s oceans

Cooperation on maritime security is premised on upholding the rule of law in the oceans. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. As the “constitution of the oceans”, and in comprehensively allocating the rights of States to maritime areas, it affirms the rule of law in maritime space.

The implementation of its provisions on enforcement and jurisdiction requirements for States as well as on the treatment of illegal activities in the maritime domain is needed.

Maritime security in the region

The Philippines aspires for the South China Sea to remain a sea of peace, security, stability and prosperity. Disputes must be resolved peacefully in accordance with international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and in the recent light of the arbitral award of 2016, which singled out no one and was so carefully crafted as to be usable as a tool for disputation and most helpful in clarifying maritime issues. We welcome the increasing number of expressions of support and affirmation for the award as final and binding international law.

The growing number of incidents in the South China Sea, amid the pandemic, underscores the urgency of having a code of conduct. Last week, at the ASEAN-China Post-Ministerial Conference, we turned over coordinatorship for negotiations on the code of conduct to Myanmar. The Philippines takes modest pride in the progress that it has achieved with the code of conduct during the pandemic. We remain committed to the step-by-step resumption of the negotiations. All must exercise self-restraint and refrain from destabilizing activities, as they discourage establishment of an environment conducive to prompt conclusion of an effective and substantive code of conduct.

Finally, I affirm the Philippines' firm commitment to its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, as amplified by the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes of 1982.

Annex XLIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations

The existing and emerging maritime threats to international peace and security are our common problems. Piracy, illicit drug trafficking and terrorism are present worldwide. No region in the world is safe and free of them. They exist also in our neighbourhood – the Secretary-General, António Guterres, recognized piracy as one of several peace and security threats faced by the Mediterranean region in 2017.

Such common and complex problems do not bring swift and easy answers. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the upholding of international law, one of Poland's priority topics during its 2018–2019 Security Council membership, is one of them.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea constitutes a fundamental international agreement on maritime issues. Emerging maritime security challenges should be faced using legal remedies provided for by the Convention as well as other legal instruments adopted under the auspices of the United Nations and other relevant international and regional organizations.

Internationally agreed norms should be implemented at the national level. Respect for international law, reflected in effective implementation through domestic legislation and practice, is the key to effectively fighting threats to international peace and security such as hostile, illegal and dangerous acts in the maritime domain. Enhanced administrative efforts off the coast of the coastal States are crucially important to combat maritime crimes.

Respect for international law and enhanced cooperation on the international level may contribute towards the promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes, including those related to maritime affairs. Tensions and conflicts in the contemporary world are creating even deeper division in the international arena. However, international judicial organs such as International Court of Justice or the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea have contributed to a successful conclusion to numerous maritime disputes.

Poland recognizes the need to enhance multilateral cooperation regarding non-traditional maritime threats, especially in terms of combating human, arms and drug trafficking. Therefore, since 2014, Poland has been participating in European Union operations Sophia and IRINI, whose main goal is to disrupt the business model of the trafficking of human beings in the Mediterranean.

Poland is positive that non-State and State actors' hostile activities at sea, including the illegal blocking of sea routes and violations of territorial waters, require resolute multilateral action. In this vein, we highlight that maritime security mostly depends on methods adopted to address the root causes of emerging threats, which should be the aim of all actions taken.

Annex XLIV

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations

Portugal aligns itself with the statement submitted by the European Union and would like to add the following points.

The problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach. Accordingly, maritime security hinges on an effective rules-based multilateral order, governed by international law.

In this regard, we stress the crucial role of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried.

Furthermore, international cooperation at the global, regional, subregional and bilateral levels is key in combating threats to maritime security, in accordance with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention.

Addressing maritime insecurity is a complex exercise. The sheer scale of the maritime space, the structural connections to development issues faced by communities in land, the insufficient monitoring and enforcing capabilities and the ongoing efforts to adopt and implement legal frameworks to prosecute perpetrators are some of the factors that contribute to the intricacy of this phenomenon and the difficulties faced by those engaged in mitigating it.

Coastal communities bear most of the nefarious impacts of maritime insecurity. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, organized criminal networks and threats to natural resources (such as marine pollution) take a toll on the livelihood of millions. A holistic response, targeting the root causes of insecurity, is therefore crucial.

The Gulf of Guinea is a case in point. It has become the global hotspot of maritime insecurity in terms of number of incidents, and it has revealed the fast-changing nature of the threat. Former low-risk areas are now witnessing higher numbers of attacks.

Portugal has been committed to supporting the Yaoundé Architecture. Through our “Mar Aberto” (Open Seas) initiative, as well as our bilateral defence cooperation with partner countries, we have sought to contribute to the capacity-building and patrolling resources in countries such as Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau and Sao Tome and Principe.

In that same spirit, Portugal, with the support of 17 signatory countries, has recently launched the Atlantic Centre, a centre of excellence that we hope will be an asset to the international community in promoting the security framework across the whole of the Atlantic, through dialogue, capacity-building and knowledge production. The issue of maritime security is at the core of the Centre’s activities, with multiple training opportunities being offered.

The effectiveness of the legal, legislative and operational frameworks is another relevant dimension to which Portugal seeks to contribute. Enhancing coordination should also remain a key priority. Last January, under the Portuguese presidency of the Council of the European Union, the European Union approved its pilot project of coordinated maritime presences focused on the Gulf of Guinea, which is now under way. Two ships from Portugal’s “Mar Aberto” initiative have been taking part in this project.

Seeking to promote a stronger engagement at the political level with the countries most affected, Portugal has nominated a Special Representative for Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea. In the course of our presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Portuguese Ministry of Defence organized an informal meeting of European Union Defence Ministers and leaders of African regional organizations with a mandate in the field of defence, where maritime security was recognized as a priority for both regions.

Portugal has been actively engaged in the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea, which we see as the main venue for a close dialogue between the international community and regional actors, complementing the Yaoundé Architecture. In that context, we welcome the recent establishment of the Gulf of Guinea maritime coordination forum – its work can be an important addition to a holistic response to maritime insecurity, given its focus on strengthening cooperation between navies, international shipping actors and other relevant maritime stakeholders in the region.

Annex XLV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Cho Hyun**

The international community has been witnessing numerous threats to maritime security including piracy; trafficking in narcotics, arms and persons; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; terrorist acts; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and the deterioration of the marine environment. Worrying developments taking place at sea cannot be solved by any one country and warrant comprehensive international cooperation to enhance maritime safety and security in a holistic manner.

Maritime security and safety at sea is pivotal to the Republic of Korea, as we have the fourth-highest cargo-carrying capacity in the world, with 99 per cent of imports and exports transported by shipping. Therefore, we reiterate our commitment to maintain peace and stability, lawful unimpeded commerce, and respect for international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight. We stand ready to work with the international community to safeguard maritime order based on international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and oppose all activities that undermine, destabilize or threaten the rules-based international order.

One of the major challenges undermining maritime security is piracy, which impedes free and safe navigation and poses threats to the lives of seafarers. The Republic of Korea has been paying close attention to the many pirate attacks that have recently taken place in different regions, such as the Gulf of Guinea.

The Republic of Korea strongly supports efforts to tackle this issue through the relevant international cooperation mechanisms. The Security Council has adopted various resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [2018 \(2011\)](#) and [2039 \(2012\)](#) to address piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and resolution [1816 \(2008\)](#) to counter Somali piracy. We have actively engaged in the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea and relevant discussions in the Peacebuilding Commission. The Republic of Korea has also participated in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia established in response to Security Council resolution [1851 \(2008\)](#).

When it comes to the issue of non-proliferation, it is crucial to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. Suppressing and disrupting illegal marine activities, including the evasion of maritime sanctions, requires close cooperation and coordination among States and international organizations.

Furthermore, attention should be drawn to marine pollution and the degradation of marine ecosystem, which can have negative impacts on maritime security. Should there be concerns among the international community regarding the protection and conservation of the marine environment, all stakeholders should actively engage in consultations, share information in a timely fashion and make their utmost effort to address such concerns.

To tackle every threat to maritime security and establish safe and secure maritime order, it is essential to raise awareness of such threats, strengthen consultation and information-sharing among all stakeholders and build law enforcement capacity. The Republic of Korea will redouble its efforts to enhance maritime security and cooperate with the international community in this regard.

Annex XLVI

Statement by Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations, Ileana Dinculescu

Romania aligns itself with the statement submitted by the European Union delegation on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

The unimpeded exercise of the freedom of navigation is a *sine qua non* condition for the normal conduct of international trade and for the stability of the world economy. Keeping the seas safe and ensuring that merchant vessels are able to move and operate freely and safely, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, without being attacked or threatened, are critical imperatives. All States have a vested interest in a secure maritime domain and in the protection of the sea lanes of communication, in particular of key routes used for maritime navigation; respect for international law is indispensable in order to reach these objectives.

The drone attack on the *Mercer Street* vessel – a merchant ship that was engaged in peaceful navigation off the coast of Oman, in full compliance with international law and using a well-established shipping lane – constitutes a flagrant breach of the relevant norms of international law.

This deliberate and completely unjustified action, resulting in the death of one Romanian and one British national, gravely infringes the rules enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, in particular those pertaining to the freedom of navigation – one of the oldest and best-recognized components of the legal regime of the sea.

Urgent action by the international community should be directed at ensuring that acts such as the deadly attack on the *Mercer Street* ship cease immediately and that the safety and security of commercial shipping are safeguarded.

We call on all States to uphold freedom of navigation as one of the most legitimate rights enshrined in the law of the sea.

Annex XLVII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations

Singapore thanks Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, for chairing this timely discussion on maritime security. This topic is existential for Singapore, which is a maritime nation. Singapore is situated at the confluence of key global shipping routes. Up to a third of world trade passes through the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, and Singapore is the second-largest container port in the world. Piracy and attacks on commercial vessels, such as the recent lethal attack on the merchant vessel *Mercer Street*, are serious threats to the freedom of shipping and disrupt trade, harming not just littoral States but the entire global economy, as well as seafarers who play a vital role in keeping supply chains moving. We condemn all attacks on commercial shipping. It is imperative that sea lines of communication remain open, secure and free for navigation, in accordance with international law.

The maintenance of peace and security on the oceans and seas requires adherence to international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As the General Assembly has consistently reaffirmed, the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and its integrity needs to be maintained. It is key to addressing existing and emerging challenges in the oceans and seas, including those relating to maritime security.

Given the transboundary nature of threats to maritime security, States must work with each other, and with other relevant stakeholders including industry, to enhance maritime security within the legal framework under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and in accordance with their international law obligations. The work of international bodies, such as the Security Council and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which have supported and continue to support a rules-based multilateral response to maritime security issues, is also of critical importance.

Within our region, Singapore works with Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, through the Malacca Straits Patrol, to ensure the security of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. Singapore is also pleased to be able to host the Information Sharing Centre of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia. The Agreement is the first regional Government-to-Government initiative to promote and enhance cooperation on piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. It has 21 contracting parties today, including States beyond Asia, and has been held up by IMO as a successful model for regional cooperation. It disseminates timely and accurate information on incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships, conducts detailed analyses of incidents and trends and promotes capacity-building and cooperative arrangements. Further afield, Singapore has actively contributed to and led Combined Task Force 151, as part of the international counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden.

As Singapore takes on the country coordinatorship of dialogue relations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India, we look forward to working with India to promote dialogue and strengthen cooperation on maritime security, including by exploring collaboration in relevant areas under the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. We will continue to work with our friends and partners in our region and beyond to collectively enhance maritime security for the benefit of the international community.

Annex XLVIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations

As a country located at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, Turkey is surrounded by the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, with a coastline of more than 8,400 km. Nearly 90 per cent of Turkey's foreign trade by volume is transported by sea.

Owing to this privileged position, Turkey has a robust interest in participating in and actively contributing to international discussions on maritime transport and navigation, especially maritime safety and security.

We are concerned with the ongoing threats to maritime safety and security, especially in the form of piracy, armed robbery at sea, transnational organized crime and terrorist activities. To effectively contribute to countering those threats, Turkey has joined various instruments, such as the Protocol of 2005 to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol of 2005 to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, not to mention its role as a founding member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

In addition, as a port State, Turkey has been successfully implementing the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. We also contribute to the multilateral efforts and initiatives in the field of maritime security through additional surveillance operations of the Turkish Navy and the Turkish Coast Guard Command.

We share the view that there is a need for a comprehensive approach to maritime security in order to counter current and emerging threats at sea, and we welcome the Security Council's efforts towards this end.

Turkey would like to highlight the following considerations for an effective response to the current and emerging maritime security threats.

- First, in order to effectively address the drivers of maritime crime and insecurity and strengthen coordination, cooperation between the countries and international/regional organizations bears key importance. In addition, incentives should be given to the source countries of piracy in certain regions to settle maritime crime issue once and for all. For instance, the merchant vessel *Mozart*, a Liberian vessel under Turkish charter, was attacked in January 2021 while navigating the Gulf. This deplorable act of piracy resulted in the death of a seafarer along with the kidnapping of over a dozen Turkish seafarers. These maritime crimes and the ensuing insecurity have become a deep-rooted problem for freedom of navigation. Therefore, intelligence-sharing and better coordination among the international community, increasing the capacity and know-how of the countries of the region, could be measures to be taken into consideration.
- Second, when it comes to the enhancement of threat assessment capabilities and improving crime prevention policies and conflict analysis, we believe that IMO could be a centre for real-time intelligence-sharing among Member States. IMO could publish monthly and yearly reports about the maritime threats that could take place or have taken place. Academic studies can be promoted through financial aid and workshops. The capacity of the source countries can be increased against piracy or maritime crimes through educating naval units of said countries
- Third, operational coordination can significantly contribute to tackling maritime security issues at different levels. For instance, Member States could have

regular meetings to address the possible challenges against maritime security under IMO through virtual meetings. Representatives of the States, non-governmental organizations and the private sector could attend these meetings. By publishing brief reports at the end of these meetings, all relevant seafarers could be informed about the places in which a piracy act could occur.

- Fourth, the role of private sector cannot be overlooked in tackling current and emerging threats at sea. Private sector actors could relay any relevant information to the littoral State regarding a possible threat to maritime security. Furthermore, the captains or other seafarers could inform a single centre that could be established to monitor maritime security challenges. This would expand the network of intelligence-sharing through commercial vessels. All relevant authorities could be informed about the needs of commercial ships from the private sector so that the necessary steps could be taken to tackle these problems by countries.
- Last but not least, in the area of the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes, Turkey is of the view that the first tool should be peaceful negotiations between countries. Not only codified law but also customary international law should be taken into account while considering maritime disputes. Most maritime issues around the world are sui generis and require attention to their own specificities.

As ever, Turkey is deeply committed to enhancing maritime safety and security in its region and globally. We will continue to support and contribute to the international initiatives and efforts toward this end.

Annex XLIX

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations

We recognize the vital importance of preserving peace, security and stability at sea for the benefit of the international community. In this regard, Ukraine is committed to contributing to strengthening international cooperation and developing effective measures to respond to maritime security challenges.

Ukraine is deeply concerned by transnational organized crime, maritime piracy and trafficking in persons, as well as the smuggling of migrants at sea, which pose a threat to global and regional security and stability.

Ukraine recognizes that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea establishes the overarching legal framework within which all activities in oceans and seas must be carried out. By setting out a legal order for seas and oceans, the Convention continues to contribute to peace and security, cooperation and friendly relations among all nations, protecting and preserving the marine environment and ensuring the sustainable use of the oceans and marine resources. The Convention requires States parties to settle any dispute between them concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention by peaceful means. Consistent with Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations and article 279 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Ukraine has striven to peacefully resolve its dispute with the Russian Federation.

We would like to recall that, since early 2014, Russia has engaged in numerous blatant violations of Ukraine's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant rules and principles of international law; unlawfully excluded Ukraine from exercising its maritime rights in the Black Sea, Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait; exploited Ukraine's sovereign resources in those waters for its own ends; and usurped Ukraine's right to regulate within its own maritime areas in those waters.

In April 2021, Russia announced that, until October 2021, a part of the Black Sea in the direction of the Kerch Strait would be closed to foreign naval ships and State vessels under the pretext of military training. In addition, the President of the Russian Federation has recently signed the law that grants Russia's National Guard the right to block territories and waters adjacent to a number of objects of infrastructure.

Such actions constitute a blatant violation of one of the core principles of the constitution of the seas – freedom of navigation and peaceful passage.

Russia engages in unlawful behaviour on the sea, interfering and blocking navigation not only for commercial vessels going to and from Ukrainian ports but also impeding naval vessels flying under different flags, including those of Security Council permanent members, to conduct their peaceful activities.

Russia's behaviour grossly neglects the rights of Ukraine as a coastal State, as well as constituting a flagrant violation of the freedom of navigation, guaranteed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. According to the Convention, Russia must not hinder or interfere with transit passage through the international strait to the ports of the Sea of Azov.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing military build-up along the State border of Ukraine, Russia reinforces its military capabilities in the Azov-Black Sea region, in particular by increasing the number of naval vessels, including those capable of carrying nuclear weapons.

Russia's behaviour clearly indicates its unwillingness to cease its aggressive actions that threaten both the national security of Ukraine and the security and stability of South-Eastern Europe. This also underscores the urgent need for a consolidated international response to ensure Russia's compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other norms of international law.

Russia must cease its aggression against Ukraine, restore respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and for Ukraine's rights in its own waters, cease and revoke all unlawful activities and decisions, including on closing certain water areas of the Black Sea, and pay respective compensation, among other relief.

Annex L**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

Global and regional maritime security is affected by a variety of traditional and non-traditional challenges, including piracy, armed robbery, terrorism and transnational organized crimes against ships at sea that include human trafficking, arms trafficking and other crimes involving the seas and the fisheries sector. The deterioration of conditions in the ocean and the effects of climate change are at the heart of security concerns, given the more than 3 billion people depend on the seas and oceans for their livelihoods. The response of the international community must therefore be internally coherent and consistent with international law.

There is no question that shipping is the backbone of the global economy and a major driver of nation stability and prosperity. Every country – coastal or landlocked – relies on shipping for food, medicine, vaccines and other goods and services. Maritime security is essential to shipping and vital to global energy supplies and sustainable development. The issue is particularly pertinent to our region; almost one third of the world's energy resources are transported by ship through the Strait of Hormuz. It is therefore in our common interest to all work together to address threats that might affect the safety of shipping routes, which are the lifeblood of the global economy, and directly threaten global security. We have recently been seeing a disruption of offshore supply chains owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that has had serious economic repercussions at the international level.

The United Arab Emirates is committed to protecting maritime security, including commercial shipping. We are therefore deeply concerned about the sharp rise in the number of attacks and threats against commercial vessels in the region, including recent attacks off our coasts and the coasts of Oman. The repercussions of these attacks go well beyond the borders of our region, not to mention their impact on freedom of navigation and on the fragile global economic recovery after the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. These attacks must be stopped immediately, and ships allowed to sail freely in accordance with international law. The United Arab Emirates will work in close coordination with partners to ensure the security and safety of maritime navigation in our region.

Maritime security and environmental sustainability are two sides of the same coin. Due attention must be paid to threats to maritime safety and the marine environment caused by the oil tanker *Safer* anchored off the coast of Yemen. Corrosion and lack of maintenance of this tanker, which has been floating abandoned since 2015, could cause it to explode and leak more than 1 million barrels of oil into the Red Sea. In that connection, my country welcomes efforts made by the United Nations to mitigate the risks posed by this tanker. We urge the United Nations to send a mission to assess the tanker's condition with a view to further measures.

The United Arab Emirates proposes the following recommendations to support maritime security:

First, the Security Council should work together with the International Maritime Organization on ways to strengthen coordination, cooperation and joint action between States – particularly those that border or use sea lanes – and other relevant organizations. Cooperation mechanisms should be strengthened, better protection should be provided, and attacks in strategic shipping corridors must be prevented and deterred in order to maintain the security of these corridors and keep them open to international navigation.

Secondly, we urge Member States to support freedom of navigation as one of the fundamental principles of international law. In areas where tension and polarization are high, the risks become greater. We also encourage all actors to commit to building trust by opening lines of communication at sea to avoid miscalculation and promote restraint.

Thirdly, we recommend more reports from the Secretary-General reports on climate change-related marine security risks to help the Council to predict such risks and take action. It is anticipated that the accumulating repercussions of climate change and degradation of the ocean environment will lead to more crime on the seas. Instability resulting from climate change will also contribute to food insecurity, competition for resources and disruption of ocean livelihood resources. Sea level rise resulting from climate change poses a serious threat to many islands and coastal areas and could lead to significant instability.

In closing, the United Arab Emirates reaffirms its commitment to supporting regional and international efforts to address threats to maritime navigation, the marine environment and global trade.

Annex LI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations, Abdullah Al-Saadi**

International cooperation to maintain maritime security is needed more than ever, especially in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Spreading maritime domain awareness while sharing information, data and resources should facilitate the international communities' efforts towards establishing an international framework for maritime security. In particular, stakeholders need to work together in implementing international instruments, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to address emerging maritime security challenges.

In Yemen, a country with around 2,500 km of coastline and set on one of the world's most important maritime passages – Bab al-Mandab strait – the threats and challenges with regard to maritime security have never been greater. Yet the Government of Yemen, supported by the international community, including the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, is sparing no efforts in addressing the security and environmental challenges in both the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

After the Houthi militias' coup in 2014, the Government had to rebuild its coast guard forces, train its personnel, and equip them with the needed resources to counter piracy, smuggling, and attacks against civilian ships and vessels. However, further international support is needed to address the growing threats posed by the Houthi militias in the southern Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab strait.

Houthi threats, attacks and use of sea mines have been documented by several international organizations and bodies, including the Panel of Experts on Yemen of the Security Council. The Houthis have committed over 20 incidents involving suspicious approaches and attacks on civilian ships in 2020 alone. In these attacks, the Houthis used waterborne improvised explosive devices, skiffs and speedboats. These technologies are found to match the ones used by the Iranian regime, clear evidence of their sponsoring and engagement in actions that pose threats to the stability, peace and security of Yemen, the region and the world.

The Iranian-Houthi threat to maritime security is also showcased in the Iranian non-compliance with, and violation of, the Yemen targeted arms embargo, as stated in Security Council resolution [2216 \(2015\)](#). It is also found that international waters are being used by smugglers to perform ship-to-ship transfers of weapons that are used by the Houthi militias to prolong the war and target civilians and civilian objects within and across the borders of Yemen.

Furthermore, the Houthi militias' prevention of the United Nations technical team from inspecting and repairing the FSO *Safer* tanker, despite years of warnings of an environmental catastrophe, poses a great danger to the maritime environment in the Red Sea. Such actions are recognized by the United Nations report of 2008 on the oceans and the law of the sea as "threats to human life and safety both at sea and on land".

Finally, allow me to use this forum to reemphasize the need for an international effort to address the challenges facing maritime security globally. In particular in Yemen, where an international role, including through the Security Council, is needed to end the Houthi militias' threats to international maritime lanes, including the use of waterborne improvised explosive devices that has long-term consequences for international commerce and for the well-being of societies, especially in areas of conflict.