

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

by The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC),
The Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO),
International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), and
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

Safeguarding Seafarers: A Shared Responsibility

Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2012

26 April 2012, Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore

1. The ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS jointly organised the Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2012 on 26 April 2012 at Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore. The Conference was held in conjunction with the Singapore Maritime Week 2012.
2. The theme of this year's conference was *Safeguarding Seafarers: A Shared Responsibility*. The aim of this Conference was to provide a platform for all to share information and views on the situation of piracy and robbery at sea, exchange ideas, share best management practices, address and appreciate challenges encountered by government agencies, ship owners/operators, ship masters and crew.
3. The Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2012 featured addresses and presentations by distinguished speakers, including the former Chairperson of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Secretary-General of BIMCO, representatives from INTERTANKO, Asian Shipowner's Forum (ASF), and international shipping and maritime industry.
4. At the opening remarks delivered by Ambassador Dr Pornchai Danvivathana, Governor (Thailand), also the ex-Chairperson (2009-11) of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council, stressed that, "Combating piracy and armed robbery at sea is not the responsibility of the government or the shipping industry alone; it is the responsibility of all stakeholders including governments, shipping companies, ship owners, ship operators and ships' crew." He added that all has a part to play in eradicating the threat posed by piracy and armed robbery against ships.
5. Mr Koji Sekimizu, Secretary-General of the IMO, in his keynote address reiterated the importance of close cooperation between the law enforcement agencies and the shipping industries. He further commended the ReCAAP ISC on its remarkable achievements in areas of exchanging information among Contracting Parties on incidents of piracy and armed robbery, supporting capacity building efforts and facilitating cooperative arrangements since its inception on 29 November 2006.
6. Mr Torben C. Skannild, Secretary-General of BIMCO, in his Opening Remarks highlighted the need to recognise the threats in the coast off Somalia and the Western Indian Ocean areas, and all stakeholders must find ways and means to work closer in order to resume the safe and peaceful shipping lanes.

7. The first session of the Conference was entitled: "Overview and Perspective of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships", started with ReCAAP ISC sharing "Trends of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia" and Mr Yuichi Sonoda, Secretary-General of the ASF offering the Asian shipowners' perspective, as well as Mr Tim Wilkins of INTERTANKO, speaking on the continuous need for Best Management Practices (BMP) and future requirements for safe transit.

8. In the second session entitled: "Safeguarding Seafarers: Citadel and Armed Guards onboard Vessels", CDR SG Stein Olav Hagalid of NATO Shipping Centre spoke on Somali Piracy: The Ongoing Threat. Mr Giles Noakes of BIMCO and Captain Choi Gum Chul of Hanjin Ship Management presented Citadel: "IMO Guidelines" and "Case Study" respectively. The much debatable topic: "Engaging of privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) onboard ships" was covered by Captain Geoffrey John Pearson of BW Fleet Management who presented a case study, and Mr Bill Kerr of Holman Fenwick Willan Singapore LLP who shared on the legal aspect of the topic.

9. The Q & A Session moderated by Dr Euan Graham of RSIS, together with all speakers as panellists covered a wide spectrum of topics. It was most mind-engaging with the active participation from the conference participants.

ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS
26 April 2012

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FACT SHEET

About the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), and the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC)

The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) is the first regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery in Asia. It was finalised on 11 November 2004 and entered into force on 4 September 2006. To date, 17 States have become Contracting Parties to ReCAAP.

The seventeen Contracting Parties to ReCAAP are the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam¹.

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC) was established under the Agreement, and was officially launched in Singapore on 29 November 2006. It was formally recognised as an international organisation on 30 January 2007.

The roles of the ReCAAP ISC are to:

- serve as a platform for information exchange with the ReCAAP Focal Points via the Information Network System (IFN); facilitate communications and information exchange among participating governments to improve incident response by member countries; analyse and provide accurate statistics of the piracy and armed robbery incidents to foster better understanding of the situation in Asia;
- facilitate capacity building efforts that help improve the capability of member countries in combating piracy and armed robbery in the region; and
- cooperate with organizations and like-minded parties on joint exercises, information sharing, capacity building programme, or other forms of cooperation, as appropriate, and agreed upon among the Contracting Parties.

The ReCAAP ISC facilitates exchange of information among the ReCAAP Focal Points through a secure web-based Information Network System (IFN). Through this network, the ReCAAP Focal Points are linked to each other as well as the ReCAAP ISC on a 24/7 basis, and are able to facilitate appropriate responses to incident. The agency receiving the incident report will manage the incident in accordance to its national policies and response procedures, and provide assistance to the victim ship where possible. The agency will in turn, inform their ReCAAP Focal Point which will submit an incident report to the ReCAAP ISC and its neighbouring Focal Points.

For more information about the ReCAAP and ReCAAP ISC, please visit <http://www.recaap.org>

¹ The United Kingdom will accede to the ReCAAP Agreement on 2 May 2012 becoming the 18th Contracting Party.

About the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO)

“BIMCO is the largest of the international shipping associations, with a membership drawn from a broad representation of stakeholders within the shipping industry, notably from the shipowning community, representing 640 million DWT or about 65% of merchant shipping. With a total membership of approximately 2,600 individual members from 123 countries, composed of shipowners, shipbrokers and agents and other entities with an interest in or associated with the Maritime Industries, BIMCO is widely respected for its practical approach and its opinions and recommendations are regular and important elements in the international governmental organizations’ process of creating international standards and guidelines for the shipping industry. BIMCO is accredited as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and holds observers’ status with several United Nations agencies involved with shipping industry matters, notably the International Maritime Organization and working closely together with maritime administrators in e.g. the European Community and the United States. In recognition of its position within the international shipping community, the US Coast Guard formed a partnership agreement with BIMCO to jointly address issues of regulatory compliance and maritime governance in an effort to find practical and workable solutions for shipowners plying US trade. BIMCO is committed to promote fair and equitable international shipping policy and regulatory matters and seeks to continue to be the selected and trusted sparring partner and source of practical information by policymakers and other stakeholders.”

About International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO)

INTERTANKO has been the voice of independent tanker owners since 1970, ensuring that the oil that keeps the world turning is shipped safely, responsibly and competitively.

Membership is open to independent tanker owners and operators of oil and chemical tankers, i.e. non-oil companies and non-state controlled tanker owners, who fulfil the Association's membership criteria. Independent owners operate some 80% of the world's tanker fleet and the vast majority are INTERTANKO members. As of January 2012, the organisation had 240 members, whose combined fleet comprises some 3,100 tankers totalling 250 million dwt. INTERTANKO's associate membership stands at some 330 companies with an interest in shipping of oil and chemicals.

About S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) was officially inaugurated on 1 January 2007. Before that, it was known as the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), which was established ten years earlier on 30 July 1996. Like its predecessor, RSIS was established as an autonomous entity within the Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

The School exists to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of Asia-Pacific security studies and international affairs. Its three core functions are research, graduate teaching and networking activities in the Asia-Pacific region. It produces cutting-edge security related research in Asia-Pacific Security, Conflict and Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Area Studies.

The School's activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia-Pacific and their implications for Singapore.