PRESS RELEASE
The Sixth Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC)

1   At the Sixth Annual Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council held on 6-8 March 2012 in Singapore, Governors from the seventeen[1] ReCAAP countries commended the ReCAAP ISC on achieving further milestones in research and analysis, capacity building, engagement and co-operation with other organisations with interests in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships. Partner Organisations from International Organisations and maritime industry, as well as an Observer and External Participants also participated in the Meeting.

2   The Council was gratified to witness the Signing Ceremony of a new HQ Agreement between the ReCAAP ISC and Singapore Government. The Agreement formalises the Singapore Government's continued support for the ReCAAP by hosting the ReCAAP ISC in Singapore for a further five years.

3   The Council welcomed the accession of the United Kingdom to the ReCAAP with effect from 2 May 2012 and their participation at this Governing Council Meeting. The expansion of ReCAAP membership demonstrates ReCAAP's growing credibility and relevance in the international maritime community, and further underscores the importance of international cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery effectively. In this light, the Council recognised the importance of full participation of all countries listed in Article 18(1) of the ReCAAP Agreement, and hoped that those who have yet to sign and ratify the Agreement would do so to collectively address the issue of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. The Council also welcomed external participants[2] to attend part of its deliberation, including for the first time, the European Commission.

4   The Council applauded ReCAAP ISC's initiative to embark on a deliberation of "The Way Ahead" aimed at enhancing ReCAAP ISC's value propositions in information-sharing, capacity building and co-operation with the industry and partner organisations. The Council commended ReCAAP ISC's innovative approach to facilitating inter-agency co-operation and industry engagement at each Contracting Party.

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[1] The ReCAAP countries are listed in Annexe 1.
[2] The list of external participants represented at the meeting is attached in Annexe 2.

5   The Council commended the ReCAAP ISC on the release of its Annual Report 2011 which detailed the findings on piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. The Council further noted the year 2011 showed a decline in the total incidence of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. This is a result of a significant decrease in the number of Category 2 or Moderately Significant incidents, from 59 in the year 2010 to 38 in the year 2011. The number of Category 3 or Less Significant incidents increased from 71 to 88 over the same period. A large number of these incidents were characterised by the theft of ship stores, spares and personal valuables while the victim ship was at anchor, with no threat to the crew. There was an increase from 4 to 7 in the number of Category 1 or Very Significant incidents. Nevertheless, through sound regional cooperation and timely information sharing in Asia and resolute actions by littoral States, all crew involved in these incidents were rescued and unharmed, most of culprits involved were apprehended, and all hijacked vessels were recovered.

6   In the area of capacity building, the Council welcomed the successful conduct of various ReCAAP ISC capacity building activities including the ReCAAP Focal Point Senior Officers' Meeting 4/11 co-hosted with Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM) of the Republic of Korea on 7-9 June 2011 in Seoul, Republic of Korea.; and the ReCAAP ISC Capacity Building Workshop 5/11 co-hosted with the Indian Coast Guard in Goa, India, on 15-17 November 2011. With the continual conduct of activities at various venues, participants gained exposure to the best practices of the various focal points, and to observe/experience the unique settings applicable to its local context.

7   The Council applauded the successful conduct of Cluster Meetings – a new initiative undertaken by ReCAAP ISC in 2011. These Meetings aimed to better engage specific Focal Point and its government agencies, shipping industries and the neighbouring Focal Points to address the issue of piracy and armed robbery against ships and seek avenues for cooperation and collaboration collectively. Two such Meetings were held in Hanoi, Vietnam and Dhaka, Bangladesh jointly organised with the Vietnam Marine Police and the Ministry of Shipping of Bangladesh respectively.

8   The Council noted that ReCAAP ISC's statistics and analyses are now frequently cited in media and industry publications. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has also held up the ReCAAP initiative as a model of inter-governmental co-operation

against piracy that other regions could emulate. In addition, the ReCAAP ISC participated in United Nations (UN) and other international conferences / forums on piracy matters.

9   The Council reiterated its serious concern over the deterioration of the piracy situation in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia and noted the relative success in recent years in operational coordination of international efforts and the positive work of the Contact Group on piracy off the coast of Somalia. At the same time, the Council expressed its highest concern about the fate of the ships and their crew members which are still under captivity by Somalia pirates. In this regards, the Council commended the concrete efforts of the ReCAAP ISC, under its Cooperative Agreement with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), in the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) through sharing of its experiences and expertise as part of the wider efforts of the international community to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. These included a Centre-to-Centre Dialogue in Dubai with DCoC ISCs that led to the establishment of communication linkages with them; and ReCAAP ISC's active contribution to the Expert Meeting and Open Forum for Capacity Building of Neighbouring States of Somalia in the field of maritime law enforcement activities which was organised by the Japan Coast Guard and the Ocean Policy Research Foundation in Tokyo in November 2011.

10   Representatives from industry organisations who attended the meeting also expressed their support for the ReCAAP initiative, and reiterated their desire to collaborate with the ReCAAP ISC.

11   The Council was pleased to note the ReCAAP ISC's initiative in engaging the members of shipping community by conducting Nautical Forums in 2012. The Council looked forward to the conduct of ReCAAP ISC Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2012, jointly organised with BIMCO, INTERTANKO, and RSIS[3] on 26 April 2012 in Singapore, with the main objective of engaging the shipping community. To this end, the Council urges ship masters to immediately report incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships to the relevant authorities, to enable a more effective response and encourage multi-channel reporting, as advocated by the IMO MSC Circ. 1333/1334.

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[3] RSIS: S.Rajaratnam School of International Studies – a Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University of Singapore

12   The Council welcomed the voluntary contributions pledged by the ReCAAP Contracting Parties towards the work of the ReCAAP ISC for FY 2012[4] as follows:

People's Republic of China	USD	50,000	
Republic of India	USD	50,000	
Japan	SGD	588,900	(estimate)
Republic of Korea	KRW	100 million	
Kingdom of the Netherlands	EUR	25,000	
Kingdom of Norway	USD	100,000	
Republic of Singapore	SGD	1,611,300	

This assistance is in addition to the secondment of staff from China, India, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Philippines and Thailand.

The Council also thanked the Government of Japan for making a special contribution of USD 561,797 in addition to the yearly financial contribution. This contribution will be separately managed and be used for the development of the anti-piracy efforts for Somalia / Gulf of Aden / Indian Ocean area.

13   The Council reiterated the importance of the ReCAAP ISC being the conduit between the law enforcement agencies and the shipping agencies, called for greater cooperation among the like-minded agencies in suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships, and having ReCAAP ISC continue to work with the IMO in their efforts to implement the Djibouti Code of Conduct to suppress piracy in the Gulf of Aden / Western Indian Ocean.

14   The Seventh Annual Meeting of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council is scheduled for week of 4-8 March 2013 to be held in Singapore.

The ReCAAP ISC Governing Council
8 March 2012

(Please contact The ReCAAP ISC Secretariat, Ms Amy Fang at 6376 3091, for further enquiries.)

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[4] FY 2012: 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013

Further information on the ReCAAP and the ReCAAP ISC

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 Nam[5].

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

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

Contracting Parties to the ReCAAP

1. People's Republic of Bangladesh
2. Brunei Darussalam
3. Kingdom of Cambodia
4. People's Republic of China
5. Kingdom of Denmark
6. Republic of India
7. Japan
8. Republic of Korea
9. Lao People's Democratic Republic
10. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
11. Kingdom of the Netherlands
12. Kingdom of Norway
13. Republic of the Philippines
14. Republic of Singapore
15. Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
16. Kingdom of Thailand
17. Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Contracting Parties to the ReCAAP with effect from 2 May 2012

1. United Kingdom

External Participants Represented at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre Governing Council

<u>States</u>

1. Malaysia
2. Australia

<u>Organisations</u>

3. European Commission (EC)
4. International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)
5. Information Fusion Centre (IFC)
6. Asian Shipowners' Forum (ASF)
7. Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO)
8. International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners (INTERCARGO)
9. International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO)
10. International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)
11. Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Association (FASA)/Singapore Shipping Association (SSA)