

(for immediate release)

## **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)

### **Separating Fact from Fiction**

ReCAAP ISC Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2015

23 April 2015, Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

1. The ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS jointly organised the Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2015, on 23 April 2015 at Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore – the seventh event in the series that was held in conjunction with the 10<sup>th</sup> Singapore Maritime Week.
2. The theme of this year's conference was *Separating Fact from Fiction*. The aims of this Conference were to serve as an information sharing platform where perspective and views were exchanged among the ReCAAP ISC, local and overseas shipping industries, enforcement agencies, academic institutes, media, together some of the best management practices and lessons learned through the respective real-life scenarios, to participate in interactive discussion with presenters and speakers on some of the realities, myths and challenges in an incident of piracy and sea robbery, to share on the efforts by regional authorities in combating piracy and sea robbery, and to network with leaders and members of the local and international shipping and maritime industry.
3. At the opening Remarks delivered by the Executive Director, ReCAAP ISC, Mr Yoshihisa Endo, on behalf of Ambassador Dr Pornchai Danvivathana, Governor (Thailand), also the Chairperson of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council, he expressed concerns over the current surge in number of incidents in this region, and the increase in siphoning of ship fuel / oil in 2014 compared to 2013, and pointed out the needs to closely monitor the development. At the same time in addressing these challenges he emphasised the importance of establishment of the cooperative mechanism among the stakeholders, such as timely reporting by seafarers, quick response from the enforcement agencies, and the close cooperation among all stakeholders. In this respect, he introduced the recent successful cases arising from the emergence of cooperative mechanism among the stakeholders in this region, which brought about arrest of perpetrators.
4. The Keynote Address for this Conference was delivered by the IMO's Assistant Secretary-General, also the Director for Maritime Safety Division, Mr Andrew Winbow, in which he reiterated how the IMO promotes the ReCAAP as a model for inter-governmental cooperation to be emulated, such as Djibouti Code of Conduct. Gist of his messages can be summarized as follows: First, the incident figures presented by ReCAAP ISC, even though they are not welcome one, they

demonstrate willingness of the ReCAAP ISC to keep the information as transparent and credible one which is necessary to remain to be a reputable organization. Secondly, effort of the ReCAAP ISC to engage the industries such as convening this conference is encouraging. Thirdly, he advised to produce a kind of best management practice along with other stakeholders regarding the recent increased frequency of siphoning incidents. And, at last, the key message was: keep on moving towards the Center of Excellence with confidence in your work. The ReCAAP ISC takes his message as its guiding principal in its moving forward. To further benefit all the members and the industry that trades in the region, he called on the Governing Council to intensify its efforts towards bringing the two remaining littoral States in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore to join the ReCAAP.

5. The United Nations (UN) welcomes the important works of the ReCAAP. In a message of appreciation to ReCAAP, Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs says that, “We welcome the important work of ReCAAP, the first intergovernmental body designated specifically to enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery in Asia Pacific. ReCAAP’s Information Sharing Centre (ISC) has played an important role in contributing to the safe navigation of the vital sea lanes in the region through combating piracy and armed robbery.” The UN highlights the need to address the global / transnational crimes such as piracy, and underscores the importance of collective, coordinated, and multi-dimensional approach. Further, the UN continues to support regional endeavour such as the ReCAAP and views that the 7<sup>th</sup> ReCAAP Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference held in 2015 being timely and promises to further strengthen a commitment by all stakeholders that will contribute to achieving a safe and secure maritime environment in the region.

6. For the first time, the Conference offered two scenario cases carefully tailored for discussions and were carried out in the form of role playing aiming at enhancing seafarers’ responses to sea robbery incidents. The interactive panel discussions were led by distinguished and renowned panelists who were experts in their own fields. Both of these panel discussions were moderated by Mr Abd. Rahim Hussin, who previously was Undersecretary of the Malaysia’s National Security Council. Audiences participated actively, debating and discussing intensively at both panel discussions, posing numerous thought-provoking questions based on different perspectives.

7. Mr John Barry from INTERPOL General Secretariat’s Maritime Security Sub-Directorate gave a presentation on Piracy attacks in ‘South East Asia’ highlighting the transnational nature of piracy incidents, its trends and modus operandi. The participation of INTERPOL demonstrates the close cooperation in information sharing between INTERPOL and the ReCAAP ISC leveraging on the latter extensive network and responsiveness to address the evolving modus operandi of pirates. Also, the combination of the two specialised agencies is expected to give deterrence effects over perpetrators of siphoning incidents.

8. In the closing, Mr Endo appreciated the turn-out rate of some 200 participants. These included Heads of Diplomatic mission, IMO, government agencies from Malaysia and Singapore, ASF<sup>1</sup>, INTERPOL ICGI<sup>2</sup>, SMOU<sup>3</sup>, distinguished national

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<sup>1</sup> ASF: Asian Shipowners’ Forum

shipping associations of Malaysia and Singapore (MASA<sup>4</sup> and SSA<sup>5</sup>), higher learning institutes (CIL<sup>6</sup>, Cardiff University, SMA<sup>7</sup> and WMI<sup>8</sup>), research institutes (KAS<sup>9</sup>, NAMARIN<sup>10</sup> and NMC<sup>11</sup>), other stakeholders and like-minded individuals. This variety of participants from many fields and many regions proves the ReCAAP to be a body of strong relevance not only for regional maritime community but also, International maritime community. It also demonstrates successful outcome of the ReCAAP's outreach efforts to strengthen its networking and partnership with relevant stakeholders.

ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS  
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<sup>2</sup> INTERPOL ICGI: INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation

<sup>3</sup> SMOU: Singapore Maritime Officers' Union

<sup>4</sup> MASA: Malaysian Shipowners' Association

<sup>5</sup> SSA: Singapore Shipping Association

<sup>6</sup> CIL: Centre for International Law

<sup>7</sup> SMA: Singapore Maritime Academy

<sup>8</sup> WMI: Wavelink Maritime Institute

<sup>9</sup> KAS: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

<sup>10</sup> NAMARIN: National Maritime Institute Indonesia

<sup>11</sup> NMC: Nippon Maritime Centre

## **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, 20 States have become Contracting Parties to ReCAAP.

The twenty Contracting Parties to ReCAAP are Australia, 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, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC) was established under the Agreement, and was officially launched in Singapore on 29 November 2006.

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>

### **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.