

Seychelles delivers a successful 20th Plenary of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia

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USPA NEWS - The Seychelles delegation has returned to Seychelles following the successful 20th Plenary of the Contact Group on Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS), which was co-hosted by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), and held at the Inter Continental Hotel, Balacava, Mauritius, from 5th to 7th July 2017. The Plenary this year had as theme "Leaving a Lasting Legacy for the Region"^[1], and had as aim to build on the positive accomplishments of the contact group and continuing to give greater responsibility to the region.

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Commenting on the outcomes of the Plenary, Chairman Barry Faure said: "The Seychelles presidency of the CGPCS was able to deliver on all the objectives that it set itself. Firstly, to settle all outstanding housekeeping matters like the future structure of the CGPCS, which had been bogging the group since 2016.-----

The Group can now focus on its core mandate as it agrees to remain vigilant in the fight against piracy, and to spare no effort to bring the perpetrators of piracy, the leaders, the financiers and facilitators, to justice; as well as to assist capacity building in combatting piracy both in Somalia and the greater region outside Somalia.

Secondly, the Group elected the IOC to take the Chair as of 1st January 2018 and in this respect I congratulate Mauritius, current chair of the IOC, to take lead of the CGPCS on behalf of the IOC. The Group also accepted the proposal from Seychelles to revive Working Group on Maritime Counter Piracy and Mitigation Operations, and here I would like to express my thanks to current chair the United Arab Emirates for agreeing, recognize India and Seychelles for their election to co-chair this Working Group, and welcome Sri Lanka for the interest shown in running the Secretariat. Seychelles, I can say, has delivered for the region and this has been well recognized by all our partners from within the region and beyond."^[2]

Seychelles assumed the presidency of the Contact Group on 1 st January 2016 and, in recognition of its good work, was asked to remain as Chair in 2017 at the 19th Plenary which took place in Seychelles between 31 st May and 3 rd June 2016.

The CGPCS obtains its mandate from UN Security Council Resolution 1851 of 18th December 2008. The next review of its mandate by the UN Security Council will be in November 2017.-----

The CGPCS Secretariat is hosted in Seychelles at the Regional Fusion and Law Enforcement Centre for Security and Safety at Sea, REFLECS3, and it will begin to handover to the IOC as of September 2017. The Communiqué of the 20th Plenary of the CGPCS can be viewed online at www.lessonsfrompiracy.net or by contacting the CGPCS Secretariat by email on admincgpcs@mfa.gov.sc for a copy. The Seychelles delegation comprised of Ambassador Barry Faure (Chair), Raymond St Ange, Jacques Belle, Renette Nicette, Professor Christian Bueger of Cardiff University (respectively, Director, Deputy Director and Coordinator of the CGPCS Secretariat and volunteer), Colonel Michael Rosette (SPDF), Philippe Michaud (Blue Economy), Professor Hardy (Sir James Mancham Centre for Peace Studies and Diplomacy) and Jacquelin Dugas (CEO James Michel Foundation). With apo on behalf of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles.

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