

Joint Press Release

The United Kingdom joins the ReCAAP

On 2 May 2012, the United Kingdom (UK) became the eighteenth Contracting Party to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). This cements this Government's firm commitment to tackling the scourge of piracy across the globe: protecting the trade-routes that are vital to our economy, protecting the livelihoods of seafarers who ply these waterways, and preventing criminals from profiting from piracy.

Though UK is geographically located outside Asia, it has a strong interest in the regional maritime economy and supports fully the ReCAAP aims of enhancing multilateral cooperation among its members. The latest addition to the ReCAAP signifies the growing strength of ReCAAP network and demonstrates the importance of the international cooperation to effectively address the challenges in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.

UK's Minister for Africa Mr Henry Bellingham said: "I am delighted that the UK has applied to join ReCAAP. Piracy is a scourge that needs to be tackled and the protection of UK shipping around the globe remains a priority for this government." The Minister stressed that international cooperation is the most effective way to tackle piracy, as demonstrated by the successes in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia, and is confident that the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) will continue to demonstrate its effectiveness in improving security at sea in Asia.

Mr James Hughes has been appointed as the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) Governor for UK. He is currently the Deputy Head (Global Issues), Security Policy Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The National Maritime Information Centre has been designated to be the Focal Point of UK.

Background Information

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

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, 18 States have become Contracting Parties to ReCAAP.

The eighteen 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, the United Kingdom 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. 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>

For media queries, please contact:

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