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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)

Changing Trends of Maritime Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia

ReCAAP ISC Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2017

27 April 2017, Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

1. The ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS jointly organised the Piracy and Sea Robbery Conference 2017, on 27 April 2017 morning at Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore – the ninth event in the series, and was held in conjunction with Singapore Maritime Week.
2. The theme of this year's conference was *Changing Trends of Maritime Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia*. The Conference addressed the changing trends of piracy and sea robbery in Asia for the past 10 years, and emerging and potential threats against ships such as the abduction of crew in the Sulu-Celebes Sea, and the nexus between cybercrime and piracy. The aim of the Conference was to raise the awareness on the past trend and emerging threats of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia.
3. Distinguished speakers representing IMO¹, the Philippine Coast Guard, BIMCO, FASA² on various topics relating to piracy and armed robbery, and cybersecurity and maritime piracy in Asia. The Conference provided an information sharing platform where perspective and views were exchanged among the speakers and the audience at the Panel Discussion moderated by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, the Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS. Amb Ong commented on the session: "It is a useful discussion. Participants learned how they would approach the common challenges faced by them. This is important as we all have to work together in tackling the threat to good order and safety at sea."
4. At the Opening Remarks delivered by the Ambassador Dr Pornchai Danvivathana, Governor (Thailand), also the Chairperson of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council, recounted how the facet of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia had evolved over the last decade, and the drastic decline in the number of incidents in the Singapore Strait – a tangible result of increase in surveillance by the littoral States and enhanced vigilance of the crew. He underlined the importance to keep abreast of the latest situation, make appropriate risk assessment, exercise enhanced vigilance and make timely reporting. He also shared that the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council had endorsed the roadmap with the goal for the ReCAAP ISC to become a Centre of Excellence for information sharing by 2020.

¹ IMO – International Maritime Organization

² FASA – Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Associations

5. The Keynote Address was delivered by Dr Phillip Belcher, Marine Director of INTERTANKO, in which he said that shipping as a service industry facilitates world trade, but there existed real risks to that trade through piracy and other security risks. At a time where piracy and armed robbery were once again resurging off Somalia and remained stubbornly embedded in West Africa, the Asian solution stood out as a model of how to get to grips with the problem. Through close cooperative network, real coordination between States and actions taken ashore, Asia demonstrated to the world how a problem with global reach could be resolved: by the region, in the region.

6. The Conference's deliverables included sharing of situation awareness, best practices and precautionary measures in accordance with the *Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*, and emphasised the importance of timely reporting of incidents to the nearest coastal states in accordance with the IMO MSC.1/Circ.1333 and MSC.1/Circ.1334.

7. In the closing, Mr Masafumi Kuroki, the Executive Director of the ReCAAP ISC thanked the speakers and participants for sharing their expertise, knowledge and concerns. He stressed the importance for all stakeholders to remain vigilant and to sustain the efforts to address piracy and sea robbery from a long term perspective since the trends are changing. He expressed the intention of the ReCAAP ISC to remain relevant for the maritime community by undertaking new activities and working collectively with the stakeholders.

8. 180 participants attended the Conference. These included Ambassador and Head of Delegation of European Union, Embassy Representatives of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, India, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom and Vietnam; law enforcement agencies' representative from INTERPOL, Indonesian Marine Police, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency and the Republic of Singapore Navy's Information Fusion Centre, shipping associations' Secretary Generals and staff members, academic experts and like-minded individuals. This variety of participants from many fields and many regions proves the ReCAAP ISC 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 ISC's outreach efforts to strengthen its networking, fostering confidence and trust, and partnership with the relevant stakeholders.

ReCAAP ISC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO and RSIS
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FACT SHEET

About the 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 against ships in Asia. The Agreement entered into force on 4 September 2006. To date, 20 States (14 Asian countries, 4 European countries, Australia, the USA) have become Contracting Parties to ReCAAP.

The 20 Contracting Parties of the ReCAAP (as of April 2017):

Australia	Republic of the Union of Myanmar
People's Republic of Bangladesh	Kingdom of the Netherlands
Brunei Darussalam	Kingdom of Norway
Kingdom of Cambodia	Republic of the Philippines
People's Republic of China	Republic of Singapore
Kingdom of Denmark	Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Republic of India	Kingdom of Thailand
Japan	United Kingdom
Republic of Korea	United States of America
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

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

The roles and activities of the ReCAAP ISC consist of the following three pillars.

• Information Sharing

The ReCAAP ISC conducts timely and accurate information sharing on incidents of piracy and sea robbery. The ReCAAP ISC manages a network of information sharing with the Focal Points of Contracting Parties on 24/7 basis. Through this information sharing, the ReCAAP ISC can issue warnings and alerts to the shipping industry and facilitate the responses by the law enforcement agencies of littoral states. Based on the detailed information of incidents collected, verified and collated, the ReCAAP ISC provides accurate statistics and analysis of the piracy and armed robbery situation in Asia by its periodical reports (weekly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annual reports).

• Capacity Building

In order to strengthen its network of information sharing, the ReCAAP ISC conducts capacity building activities of the Focal Points of the Contracting Parties through the training of their reporting skill, sharing best practices, updating the situation of piracy and armed robbery. It also facilitates the Focal Points to promote cooperation with other governmental agencies and shipping industry.

• Cooperative Arrangements

The ReCAAP ISC promotes cooperation with other regional and international organisations (governmental organisations and shipping associations) to share information and best practices and to enhance its network in order to address the piracy and armed robbery collectively. It has signed documents of cooperation with likeminded organisations such as IMO, INTERPOL, BIMCO, INTERTANKO, ASA, IFC and DCoC.

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 world's largest international shipping association, with 2,100 members in around 130 countries. Our global membership includes shipowners, operators, managers, brokers and agents.

Our vision is to be the chosen partner trusted to provide leadership to the global industry. Our mission is to provide expert knowledge and practical advice to safeguard and add value to our members' businesses.

BIMCO's four core service areas provide value and trusted support to our members:

1. Our products include BIMCO's world leading standard contracts and clauses for the shipping industry and our contract editor IDEA. We also run the BIMCO Shipping KPI System which can be used to benchmark ships' operational performance.
2. Regulation: BIMCO takes an active role on behalf of shipowners during discussions and decisions with global and regional regulators. We work towards a level playing field for shipping – including fair trade and open access to markets.
3. Information and advice: we deal with 10,000 member queries every year on many issues and see over three million page views on our website each year. Our staff share their expert knowledge with members, giving practical advice to safeguard and add value to their businesses.
4. Our training activities include face-to-face courses, eLearning, webinars and tailor-made courses for companies.

About International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO)

INTERTANKO is the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners, a forum where the industry meets, policies are discussed and best practice developed. It is a valuable source of first-hand information, opinions and guidance. INTERTANKO has been the voice of independent tanker owners since 1970, ensuring that the liquid energy that keeps the world turning is shipped safely, responsibly and competitively. The strong support that INTERTANKO enjoys allows it to speak authoritatively and proactively on behalf of tanker operators at international, regional, national and local level.

Membership is open to independent tanker owners and operators of oil, chemical and gas tankers, i.e. non-oil companies and non-state controlled tanker owners, who fulfil the Association's membership criteria. As of January 2017, the organisation had 205 members, whose combined fleet comprises some 3,805 tankers totalling over 332 million dwt. INTERTANKO's associate membership stands at some 260 companies and organisations related to the tanker industry.

About S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate education and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Region Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific.

For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.