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by the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) and the
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

**Enhancement of the ReCAAP's Initiatives:
Launch of *Guide for Tankers Operating in Asia
Against Piracy and Armed Robbery Involving Oil Cargo Theft***

The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC), together with the Republic of Singapore Navy's Information Fusion Centre (IFC) and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), launched the *Guide for Tankers Operating in Asia Against Piracy and Armed Robbery Involving Oil Cargo Theft* on 25 November 2015 at RSIS, Singapore.

Against a backdrop of increasing numbers of incidents in 2014 involving tankers being boarded for theft of the oil cargo carried on board, the affected maritime stakeholders requested for a set of guidelines to assist their ships in avoiding, deterring or delaying such incidents, as well as how best to manage the situation afterwards. Thus, a guide was jointly produced to aid in promoting safe and secure seas for the shipping community.

The guide was put together from a collection of experiences, best practices and lessons learnt and shared by the various stakeholders and like-minded entities towards making this guide a credible and reliable source of reference. The launch event was officiated by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, and opened by Ambassador Dr Pornchai Danvivathana, Chairperson of the ReCAAP ISC Governing Council, and the Thai Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. The launch event witnessed a good turnout of representatives from the various segments of the maritime industry.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Ong said, "The security of regional shipping routes, including the Malacca and Singapore Straits, is now the focus of considerable international and regional attention. The Maritime Security Programme here at RSIS has been looking at regional maritime security issues for over a decade now, and we are happy to be collaborating once again with our long-time partners – the IFC and the ReCAAP ISC – to produce this guidebook for tankers."

Ambassador Dr Pornchai recalled that the Guide was initiated in response to and incorporation with the industry members concerned which had requested for a guide to address preventive measure and mitigate risks. He thus applauded the joint initiative of the three agencies in combining each of their expertise together aimed at

assisting the maritime stakeholders in managing these incidents. He was pleased that the cooperative efforts that resulted in the materialisation of this Guide. This further underscored the significance of joining efforts to combat and eradicate this crime at sea as no one agency could do it alone. He was also pleased to note that some of the measures were already in practice and several arrests were made, and that there were no reported incidents of oil cargo theft over the past two months.

This guide serves as a prelude to produce a regional maritime guide on piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, regardless of ship type or cargo carried. The ideas are gathered from shipping industries and others, and is slated for release in 2016 in cooperation with like-minded entities.

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