

(Check against delivery)

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR GERT ROSENTHAL
SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL
PEACE AND SECURITY: PIRACY
(19 NOVEMBER 2012)**

Mr. President,

First of all, we would like to thank the delegation of India for the timely initiative to convene this open debate on maritime piracy, a major challenge for the international community. We also express our appreciation to the delegation of India for having presented a concept note on the subject. At the same time, we thank Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson for his introductory remarks on the issue before the Council today.

Mr. President,

While every day we must face new challenges to international security, it is interesting that we must also face a challenge that has plagued our ancestors since time immemorial; piracy. Indeed, piracy and armed robbery at sea are serious threats to the lives of seafarers, detriments to safe navigation, hindrances to the flow of international humanitarian assistance to countries such as Somalia and others, and affect international trade; causing substantial economic losses to many states. It thus becomes imperative for us to act decisively to combat this worrisome trend.

This issue has been in the Security Council agenda in recent years and the Council has already taken steps to address this challenge. Its decisions, consistent with UNCLOS, create a legal basis for safety measures for navigation in various regions and send a powerful signal to the UN Member States on the need to respond

comprehensively to piracy and armed robbery at sea. It is important that the Security Council resolutions respect existing international laws.

This is why the fight against piracy must become a truly concerted effort, of broad spectrum and transnational nature. We are certain that only full cooperation between the United Nations, the affected countries, relevant international organizations, and the private sector will bring successful results.

We realize that no country can tackle piracy by itself and that in recent years this phenomenon has reached a global scale, particularly affecting the Gulf of Aden and more recently the Gulf of Guinea.

The United Nations should assist in resource mobilization. The UN agencies in the region, in particular the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), should play important roles in regional efforts to combat piracy and address issues related to terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, and the proliferation of weapons; which together conspire to destabilize the region.

Mr. President,

It is unfortunate that most cases of piracy and armed robbery at sea are left unpunished. This is largely due to the imperfection of the legal process or lack of practical tools. We stand for a more active use of international legal instruments to ensure safe navigation and the subsequent improvement of legal regulation in this area, taking into account the uniqueness of the situation.

Mr. President,

Achieving the correct and prompt prosecution of those suspected of acts of piracy and ensuring their imprisonment after the trial is essential in preventing impunity

and deterring further attacks. We fully support the strengthening of United Nations assistance to the states of the region in order to build capacity to prosecute and imprison pirates. The United Nations should focus its efforts on the following key elements: legislative reforms, capacity building in prosecuting and processing piracy cases, effective law enforcement, and improving prison infrastructure in Somalia and the other States of the region.

Mr. President,

We agree with the concept note prepared for this debate, in that piracy needs a comprehensive approach; and to eradicate this phenomenon we must confront the underlying causes. For example, we are concerned that the Secretary General's report revealed that there remains a large gap in land-based programs in Somalia to tackle piracy (paragraph 75 - S/2012/783). We believe this is the right time to strengthen Somalia and neighboring countries' capacity in regard to funding and capacity building. We also consider important that Somalia proclaims an exclusive economic zone off the coast of Somalia in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Mr. President,

Finally, although recent successes in combating piracy have decreased revenues to these criminal organizations, we remain deeply concerned about parallel illegal activities sponsored by these same revenues, and hold that activities sponsored by piracy funds continue to pose a threat to the stability and security of States. The Security Council would have a greater impact in the fight against piracy if it were able to take measures that limit the capacity of leaders who finance and instigate piracy.

Thank you very much