



IMO

"Addressing Illicit Maritime Trade and Piracy"

Committee leadership:

Director – Cesar

Moderator – Max

I. Committee Background

The United Nations International Maritime Organization is the specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating international shipping. The five committees of the IMO are

the Maritime Safety Committee, the Marine Environment Protection Committee, the Legal Committee, the Technical Cooperation Committee and the Facilitation Committee, which deals with the safety and flow of marine traffic. The IMO was made in 1948 and currently consists of 176 member states and 3 associate members. Its founding convention was signed in 1948 and it came into effect in 1958. The role of the IMO is to review matters relating to the safety and efficiency of international marine traffic and the prevention of ships polluting the marine environment. The IMO strives to ensure that all shipping is the safest it can be: secure, efficient and clean. By developing and maintaining a number of international conventions, regulations, guidelines and standards which are available for adoption by its Members, Through this process, it helps Governments to protect human life at sea, the needs of shipping and the marine environment. This helps ensure a level playing field in international shipping.



II. Introduction to the Topic

The world's oceans make transporting goods, materials, and energy sources that are essential for each country easier. However, recently, international shipping has become a

growing concern due to the significant increase in illicit activities at sea. Criminal organizations quickly take advantage of busy shipping lanes, limited surveillance, political instability, and weak enforcement of piracy and other maritime related laws. Piracy and other criminal activities pose a serious threat to international shipping. Such acts also directly affect the economies of nations that are dependent on international trade. Recent examples of piracy and armed robbery against ships have taken place in a number of regions, including parts of Southeast Asia, the Gulf of Guinea, the Gulf of Aden, and the waters of Somalia.

Challenges in Combating Illicit Maritime Trade and Piracy

Rules combating illicit maritime trade and piracy are already in existence, however, there are many challenges when it comes to enforcing the related laws. Ships operate in the territorial and international waters of many member states; because of this, cooperation between concerned jurisdictions is crucial to properly enforce these agreements. However, the differences in states when it comes to capabilities, resources, and geopolitical situations make cooperation between them difficult. Therefore, capacitybuilding at the regional level must continue to take place so that all states can work together to ensure safety at sea. Piracy can be addressed through enforcing existing international agreements. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is already a strong legal framework to deal with acts of piracy. The SUA conventions obligate member states to establish penalties for people that engage in criminal acts that threaten the safety of navigation, and the ISPS Code addresses in detail security requirements for Port Facilities and Ships. Through the IMO many more regulations have been drafted to combat piracy. However, without strong cooperation between all stakeholders (international organizations, the shipping industry, and port authorities) as well as the government, comprehensive maritime security cannot be achieved.



Criminal organizations are quick to take advantage of open sea routes to engage in illegal activity, including smuggling of goods, trafficking of weapons, trafficking illicit drugs, people, and piracy. Criminal organizations that engage in these activities pose a threat to international shipping. It is crucial that Member States come together to address this issue before it grows into an international threat to global shipping.



Emerging Challenges from Modern Maritime Crime

Modern-day pirates are becoming highly organized and have started using sophisticated and up-to-date communication and tracking devices, fake documentation, commercial ships, tech enabled smuggling, cyber-attacks, etc. to hide and facilitate their criminal activities. Criminals are making use of well-known shipping routes to transport drugs, arms, humans and other contraband items. Pirates and other criminal groups have become agile and intelligent enough to employ newer tactics like the usage of faster boats, advanced communication devices, awareness regarding traffic and vessels, etc. to attack ships. Criminal activities occurring at sea involve many jurisdictions which makes it harder to identify the perpetrators and cooperate internationally for curbing such acts as responsibility is pushed on to other party's

Strengthening International Maritime Security

Illegal trade and piracy remain among the most serious threats to international shipping. Criminals continue to exploit weaknesses in international maritime shipping lanes. To protect seafarers and maintain safe and secure routes for shipping, Members of State should consider implementing measures which may include strengthened surveillance of international shipping routes, enhanced security at ports and coastal areas, better coordination between governments, and strengthened legal frameworks to investigate and prosecute all offenders. Not all governments have the capability to implement these actions, but IMO can provide assistance through international regulation. Strengthening international maritime security requires sustained action by Member States, international organizations, and port authorities to ensure safe, secure, efficient shipping.

III. Essential Questions / Key Issues

1. How does piracy affect international maritime trade and security?
2. What types of illicit activities are most commonly carried out through international maritime routes?
3. Why are certain maritime regions more vulnerable to piracy and illicit maritime trade?
4. How can Member States improve maritime surveillance and enforcement in vulnerable regions?

5. What gaps exist in international and national laws regarding piracy and illicit maritime trade?
6. How can countries effectively investigate and prosecute individuals involved in maritime crimes?
7. How can the international community better protect seafarers, commercial vessels, and ports from piracy?
8. How can new technologies be used to detect and prevent illicit maritime activities?
9. How can Member States improve international cooperation and information sharing to combat maritime crime?
10. What actions can the IMO take to strengthen global efforts against piracy and illicit maritime trade?

IV. Countries List

1. Federal Republic of Somalia
2. United States of America
3. People's Republic of China
4. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
5. Republic of Kenya
6. Arab Republic of Egypt
7. Republic of Djibouti
8. Republic of Yemen
9. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
10. State of Israel
11. Islamic Republic of Iran
12. Syrian Arab Republic
13. Republic of Türkiye
14. Hellenic Republic
15. United Arab Emirates
16. State of Qatar
17. Republic of Azerbaijan
18. Republic of Armenia

19. People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
20. Kingdom of Morocco
21. Russian Federation
22. Ukraine
23. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24. State of Eritrea

V. Sources

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