

## **UNODC contribution to the report of the Secretary-General on Oceans and the law of the sea, pursuant to GA resolution 75/239**

### **I. Implementation of the Convention and related agreements and instruments**

UNODC published the Third Edition of the Maritime Crime Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners. The Manual was developed to provide technical support to Member States in tackling the full range of transnational maritime crime and serves both as a training tool for the capacity-building work carried out by UNODC and as a guide for criminal justice practitioners working on maritime cases.

### **II. Capacity building**

Through its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), UNODC has expanded its thematic and geographic coverage to Latin America and the Caribbean, the Mediterranean and Red Seas and the Pacific Ocean. UNODC has also continued delivering technical assistance in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

#### Atlantic Ocean

In the Atlantic Ocean, UNODC provided legislative review and assistance to Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Member States in their efforts to implement the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other relevant international conventions. Further support was offered for police, prosecution and the judiciary, as well as training to maritime law enforcement agencies on evidence collection at sea, the law of the sea and maritime crime.

A comprehensive e-learning training platform was provided to practitioners to further strengthen legal and operational capacities and knowledge of the law of the sea for the benefit of states in the Gulf of Guinea. In addition, a series of simulated trials were conducted in Benin, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Togo, aimed at building the capacity of prosecutors and investigators.

Video conferencing (VTC) and hardware equipment was provided to maritime law enforcement agencies and justice stakeholders to ameliorate the quality of current and future trials of piracy and maritime crime.

UNODC further promoted national inter-agency coordination through the development of Harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (HSOPs) on evidence collection and handling to increase successful prosecution of piracy and maritime crime cases. More specifically, legal trainings were delivered virtually in Gabon, Ghana and Nigeria. Similarly, legal assessment reports on maritime crime were conducted in Angola, Sao Tome and Principe and Sierra Leone. UNODC also supported maritime law enforcement agencies in conducting operations through the provision of technical advice and analysis on maritime domain awareness.

#### Gulf of Aden and Red Sea

In the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, with a permanent presence in the three largest Somali ports and an active programme of support to Yemen, UNODC is working to build up the capacity of Somali and Yemeni maritime law enforcement officers to police these strategic and dangerous

waters. With the ongoing crisis in Yemen and active organised crime groups moving drugs, charcoal, terrorist fighters, migrants and guns through the region, often in breach of UN sanctions, UNODC is assisting Somali and Yemeni law enforcement partners in re-establishing peace and security.

Pursuant to its mandate under UNSCR 2498 (2019), UNODC, has worked towards developing strategies to disrupt the trade in Somali charcoal and the trafficking of other illicit goods that may finance terrorist activities in Somalia. As part of that work, the Office is engaged in several targeted meetings with Member States to discuss illicit maritime flows that undermine peace and security. Looking ahead, UNODC will continue its disruption efforts under its new mandate in UNSCR 2551 (2020), including the role of fishing vessels in trafficking and illicit trade routes. In this regard, the Office coordinated, co-hosted and delivered several meetings, including the quadrilateral meetings with Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the European Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta and the UNPOE on Somalia and Yemen.

In Yemen, UNODC launched a mentor programme in Aden, offering full time support and training to the Yemen Coast Guard (YCG) in the areas of maritime law enforcement, communications, maritime domain awareness and marine engineering. Support was also provided to develop the YCG Regeneration Strategy and implement the activities under the implementation plan. UNODC also developed over 20 Standard Operating Procedures and 15 training courses customized for the YCG.

### Indian Ocean

In the Indian Ocean, UNODC is using vessels confiscated from drugs traffickers, pirates and illegal fishermen to train maritime law enforcement officers from more than 12 States to board and search vessels, especially through UNODC's maritime training centres in Bangladesh, Maldives Sri Lanka and Seychelles. UNODC is also providing continued support to piracy trials and leading on efforts to improve arrests and prosecutions of those who smuggle heroin across the Indian Ocean into East Africa.

UNODC also delivered Visit, Board, Search and Seizure and Pierside Vessel Search Techniques training to boarding teams from Bangladesh, Comoros, Kenya, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. The training included the use of captured drug dhows as training platforms in Seychelles and Sri Lanka. The availability of drug dhows to conduct the boarding and search training enhanced the capability of boarding teams to locate concealed compartments on dhows. In Sri Lanka, UNODC successfully delivered the first instructor's course and inter-agency training on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (TIP/SOM).

In the Western Indian Ocean region, UNODC established a virtual Training Planning Cell in Mozambique, following the Trilateral Strategy agreed between Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania, aimed at disrupting organised crime groups in the heroin trade. UNODC also supported national drug enforcement agencies through its Southern Route Partnership (SRP) forum, which provides a platform to discuss strategies to counter narcotics trafficking. Support was also provided to develop an advanced maritime domain awareness capability to counter illicit activity at sea. UNODC successfully expanded the activities portfolio looking to enhance Port Security and Safety of Navigation, implemented in partnership with the International

Maritime Organisation, Interpol and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in Angola, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles and Tanzania.

In the Eastern Indian Ocean region, UNODC delivered maritime domain awareness foundation training and conducted an event on countering waterborne improvised explosive devices (C-WBIED) for maritime law enforcement agencies in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Assessments were conducted in Bangladesh and Maldives on the challenges, practices and needs in the prosecution of maritime officers with judges, investigators and prosecutors. UNODC also facilitated the provision of communications and information technology equipment to support maritime domain awareness and operational capacity of maritime law enforcement agencies in Maldives.

### Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNODC strengthened prosecutorial and adjudication capacities and shared awareness with frontline actors to ensure effective legal finish to maritime crimes. Training was delivered on smuggling of migrants at sea, vessels without nationality and Article 17 of the Vienna Convention. The Caribbean Forum on Maritime Crime (CFMC) virtual series, focusing on threats and trends in the Caribbean maritime space engaged maritime law enforcement agencies, criminal justice practitioners and scholars from the region.

In Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama, UNODC also worked with maritime law enforcement officers to identify capacity building needs to respond to not only maritime crime at sea but also crimes in riverine operation theatres.

### Pacific Ocean

In the Pacific Ocean, UNODC led efforts to counter maritime crime in the Sulu and Celebes Seas by convening a trilateral contact group. The Contact Group on the Sulu and Celebes Seas (CGSCS) developed practical recommendations on radio-frequency identification (RFID) tagging for vessel registration, regional coast guard commanders' engagement (3SuluX) and tabletop exercises in the Sulu Sea.

UNODC further improved coordination to counter drug trafficking in the Andaman Sea and Malacca Straits through the Western Maritime Route Forum (WMRF). The WMRF strengthened national level coordination with Drug-Maritime Exchanges (DMX) and compiled a Compendium of Drug Seizures at Sea. Supported by UNODC, the Forum of National Maritime Fusion Centres (FNMFC) conducted learning exchanges and colloquiums on MDA technology topics for Maritime Operations Centres and produced fortnightly updated to COVID-19 Heatmap of coastal region.

At a national level, UNODC strengthened inter-agency maritime coordination in Indonesia through the development of a crime-centre SOP, training on maritime law for prosecutors and judges and a national maritime domain awareness platform. In Malaysia, UNODC delivered maritime domain awareness analytical training and facilitated policy level engagement on future decisions. In the Philippines, UNODC delivered Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) training equipment, provided RFID tagging for vessel registration and strengthened security at vulnerable piers and jetties. In Thailand, UNODC provided aviation drones to patrol the Mekong River region and delivered VBSS equipment. In the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau, Samoa and Tonga, UNODC delivered maritime domain

awareness equipment including terrestrial maritime radar to maritime surveillance centres, conducted maritime domain awareness analytical training and contact tracing training in response to COVID-19.

### **VIII. Maritime safety and security and flag State implementation**

In collaboration with the International Maritime Organization, UNODC produced national and regional practical frameworks to assist Member States in developing maritime security strategies. UNODC has also developed Member States' capacities on Maritime Domain Awareness, through use of satellite images provided by the European Union Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the EU Copernicus Programme, in the context of maritime operations conducted by the Member States with the technical support of UNODC. This has strengthened the capacity of Member States to patrol areas far from the coastline and hence provide a better understanding of planning, maintenance, operational needs.

In collaboration with the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC), UNODC assisted coastal states in the Indian Ocean including Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Seychelles to develop a National Submarine Cables Protection and Resilience Framework to support the development of criminal offences related to the damaging of submarine cables.

### **IX. Marine environment and marine resources**

Satellite images provided by the European Union Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the EU Copernicus Programme have also allowed detection of intentional oil spills in the Gulf of Guinea, increasing awareness of maritime law enforcement agencies in the region on the pervasive existence of maritime oil pollution problems and their opportunity to patrol and intervene.

In the Indian Ocean, UNODC improved the understanding and capability of maritime law enforcers to respond to crimes that affect the environment, which take place at sea. In this regard, UNODC supported maritime law enforcement personnel, customs officers and prosecutors with the skills they need to deal with crimes in the fisheries sector. VBSS training was delivered on board fishing vessels and for maritime law enforcement personnel including fisheries authorities, in close cooperation with the FAO and regional fisheries organizations. Coast guard officers were also trained in the collection and handling of evidence to support prosecutions. UNODC also assisted Seychelles and Sao Tome and Principe in tackling transshipments at sea.

Four virtual workshops were coordinated to assist the governments of Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius to tackle marine pollution by facilitating inter-agency dialogue and providing the relevant law enforcement and environment stakeholders with the necessary legal, operational and technical assistance.

### **XIII. Regional cooperation**

In Southeast Asia, UNODC continued to support regional programmes to promote cooperation and capacity in maritime law enforcement entities to combat maritime crime and secure maritime spaces. Regular Maritime Law Enforcement Dialogues, aimed at improving maritime law enforcement responses and cooperation between Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, are ongoing and participants train in tabletop exercises and develop tools to enhance cooperation. The Dialogues developed consensus on Common Regional

Guidelines for COVID-19 Safety Protocols by maritime law enforcers in Southeast Asia, improved protection of submarine data cables, and focused on de-escalation of tense situations at sea.

UNODC continued supporting the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime (IOFMC) and Prosecutors Network, bringing together national law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities to promote cooperation between states throughout the Indian Ocean region, to address piracy and maritime crime.

UNODC continued to support Caribbean countries to achieve greater cooperation at both national and regional level under existing cooperation frameworks including the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS), Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC), Regional Security System (RSS) and Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM).

UNODC facilitated regional and international cooperation networks and mechanisms through the drafting of agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) among the coastal countries of the Gulf of Guinea.