



Republic of Mauritius



Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in Western Indian Ocean

26-29 April 2018 – Intercontinental Hotel , Balaclava (Mauritius)

Press Kit

#MASE Programme

*A Strong Partnership towards a safe and secure
maritime domain*



This project is funded by the
European Union



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Content

Press Release	4
Why a Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean?	5
Threats mapping in the ESA-IO from January to December 2017	7
Objectives of the Conference	8
The conference’s participants, who are they ?	10
Press Invitation	11
Sessions’ calendar opened to the Press	11
The Organisers	14
The Republic of Mauritius	14
The Indian Ocean Commission	15
The European Union	16
The MASE Programme	17



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Contacts.....	18
IOC Communication Unit.....	18
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.....	18



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Press Release

From April 26th to 29th, 100 delegates from 30 States as well as Regional and International organisations will discuss Maritime Security issues and initiatives at a Ministerial conference in Mauritius. This major event is organized by the Republic of Mauritius, current chair of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Secretary General of IOC, with the support of the European Union (EU) through the Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean Maritime Security Programme - MASE.

A meeting of High Officials will be held from 26th to 27th April to prepare the Ministerial Conference which is scheduled for the 28th and 29th April 2018. A Ministerial Declaration with an action plan will be adopted at the end of the meeting. This document focuses on all the issues of Maritime Security namely cooperation mechanisms, the fight against illegal fishing and maritime traffickings (drugs, human, money laundering), terrorist risk, environmental crimes and marine pollution.

One of the outcome of the Ministerial Conference is the signature of the two regional agreements on the exchange of maritime information and the coordination of operations at sea. These agreements, developed as part of the EU-funded MASE programme, reflect the willingness of the regional States (IOC member States, Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia) to enhance their collaboration to tackle effectively maritime threats and crimes. The setting up of the two regional centres, one specialized in the exchange and sharing of maritime information in Madagascar and the other one specialized in the coordination of operations at sea, based in Seychelles, are the core subjects of these agreements. They will be useful instruments for securing the 6 million km² vast ocean areas of the of the Western Indian Ocean.

For more information on this event : visit : [Commission de l'océan Indien](#)



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Why a Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean?

With 14 000 kilometers of coastline and exclusive economic zones of 6 million km², the States of the Eastern Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (ESA-OI) generates \$ 176 billion of income each year according to the *Maritime Security Index*, established by Stable Seas. This, a priori, substantial figure, is below the economic maritime potential of the region. One of the reasons why one State on its own cannot fight effectively maritime crimes and threats which are slowing down regional development and the emergence of the blue/ocean economy, conducive to income and employment creation.

After recording a significant decline in recent years, piracy attacks have re-emerged in the past few months. Maritime piracy in the Western Indian Ocean has weighty impact on regional and global economies with a loss of \$13 billion in 2013. Even if, piracy attacks have decreased, other threats and maritime crimes remain a major issue for the regional States and other countries with shared interest in the area. For instance, the Illegal, Un-reported and Un-regulated fishing (IUU) in the Western Indian Ocean caused a loss of about \$ 400 million per year according to FAO which amounts to nearly \$ 1billion in terms of value -added products. The problems related to drug trafficking, human trafficking or terrorist risk affect peace and security of local communities. Not to mention the consequences of money laundering on formal financial circuits, marine pollution and its impact on both the environment and the economy.



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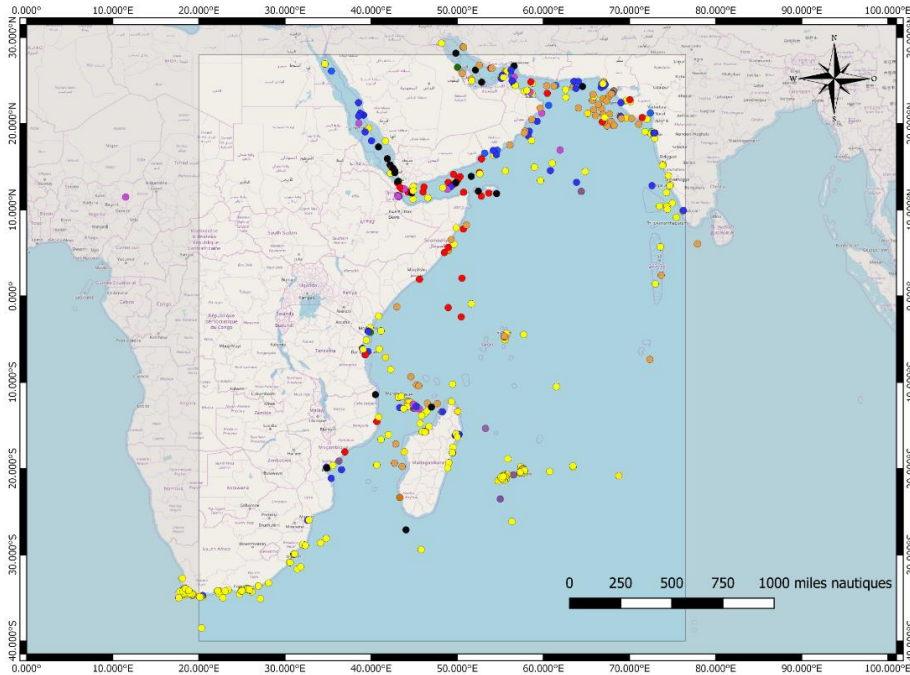
The Ministerial Conference will focus on all maritime threats and crimes and the collective solutions needed to secure the vast ocean areas for the economic and social development of the region.



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Threats mapping in the ESA-IO from January to December 2017



Legend:

	Armed robbery and piracy
	Illegal, un-reported and unregulated fishing (IUU)
	Maritime Incidents
	Arms and drugs trafficking and smuggling

Source : *Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC)*



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Objectives of the Conference

This conference ties in with ongoing regional and international mobilization such as the Djibouti Code of Conduct. It aims at identifying solutions for specific issues related to maritime insecurity

Three objectives:

1. Identify priority actions in response to maritime transnational risks and crimes;
2. Identify regional, tangible and value-added collaborative and comprehensive approaches to each of the threats to maritime safety and security in the ESA-IO region;
3. Mobilize partners and institutions and generate specific commitments for concrete actions to be implemented according to an agreed roadmap.



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What are the expected results?

- A Ministerial Declaration with a roadmap adopted and presented at the end of the Conference
- The signing of two regional agreements between the countries participating in the MASE programme on:
 - The exchange and sharing of maritime information, through the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre based in Madagascar (RMIFC)
 - The State coordinated actions at sea through the Regional Centre of Coordination Operations at sea (RCOC) based in Seychelles.



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The conference's participants, who are they?

- IOC States members : Comores, France (Reunion), Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles
- The European Union, core partner in the maritime security domain, among others
- States bordering Eastern and Southern Africa (Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa ...)
- Other States bordering the Indian Ocean (India, Australia ...)
- States with interests in the region and partners (India, China, United Kingdom, United States ...)
- Regional organizations in Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA, SADC, IGAD, EAC) and the African Union
- International Organizations (International Maritime Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Department of Political Affairs, INTERPOL, International Organization for Migration, FAO ...)
- European and international missions deployed in the Western Indian Ocean (EUNAVFOR Atalanta, NATO's Ocean Shield ...)
- Stakeholders of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia currently chaired by IOC



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Press Invitation

The press is invited to cover the Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security in the Western Indian Ocean basin from **26th to 29th April 2018** at Intercontinental Hotel in Balaclava, Mauritius. The welcoming ceremonies will be opened to the press. Nevertheless, journalists will be able to request interviews with the communication team, who will make necessary arrangements to organize meetings at the press corner, situated in front of the Plenary meeting room.

Sessions' calendar opened to the Press

When?	What?	Who ?	Additional Informations
Thursday 26 th April at 9.45 a.m	Opening of the High Officials Meeting	Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo, minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Mauritius and IOC chairman. Hamada Madi, Secretary General of the IOC Marjaana Sall, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union	An Action Note will be presented by the Officer in Charge of Maritime Security for the Indian Ocean Commission Opportunity to take on the issues, grasp the importance of the Ministerial meeting and be informed about the expected results.



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When?	What?	Who ?	Additional Informations
Saturday 28 th April from 9 a.m to 10.30 a.m	Opening session of the Ministerial Conference	Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius and Chairman of IOC Council European Union's Representative Secretary General of the IOC Vice- Prime Minister of the Federal Government of Somalia Ministers and Head of Delegations of IOC members States, Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean States, Regional and International organisations (UN agencies, African Economic Communities...)	Acknowledge the interest of each partner Get information about work in progress and take note of the priorities and possible commitments of all stakeholders.
Saturday 28 th April from 6 p.m to 9 p.m	Official Opening Ceremony	Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius	To grasp the importance given, at the highest level of the State of Mauritius, to regional maritime security.



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When?	What?	Who ?	Additional Informations
		<p>Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius and Chairman of IOC des Affaires étrangères de Maurice et président du Conseil de la COI</p> <p>Secretary General of the IOC</p> <p>Representative of the European Union and African Union (to be confirmed)</p>	<p>Get acquainted to the commitments and the political strategy.</p> <p>Understand the concrete and sustainable regional commitments to enhance Maritime Security</p>
<p>Sunday 29th April from 12.15 a.m to 1 p.m</p>	<p>Closing Ceremony and Press Conference</p>	<p>Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of IOC</p> <p>Secretary General of the IOC</p>	<p>Signature of two regional agreements on Maritime Security, one on exchange and sharing of maritime information and the other one, on State's actions at sea.</p> <p>Take account of the results of the conference and the highlights of the Ministerial Declaration as well as the adopted roadmap</p>



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The Organisers

The Republic of Mauritius

An island State of Africa, the Republic of Mauritius, which has just celebrated its independence's Jubilee, has made Ocean Economy, one of the main focuses in its national strategy to boost economic and social growth. Promoting the concept of Ocean-State, with regards to the vast ocean areas controlled by developing islands, the Republic of Mauritius, has the ambition to exploit fully and responsibly the potentials of its maritime areas in the field of fisheries, tourism, technological innovation, exploration and exploitation of seabed etc. With the aim of carrying out the country to sustainable development, the government of Mauritius has made security issues, one of its priority, especially when it comes to combating drug trafficking. Maritime Security is, of no doubt, a prerequisite for the Republic of Mauritius, to reach a new level of development.

[Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), of Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius



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The Indian Ocean Commission

Created in 1982, IOC is an intergovernmental organization that brings together five-member States: The Union of Comores, France (Reunion), Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. The only regional organization, composed entirely of islands, it defends the specificities of its member States on the continental and International arena. With the active support of a dozen international partners, the IOC gives substance to regional cohesion through diverse sectorial cooperation projects including Maritime Security. Firmly committed to sustainable development, the IOC leads for over thirty years, Indianoceanica, an ambitious yet vulnerable common regional action.

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The European Union

First contributor to International development support, the European Union is actively involved in Maritime Security initiatives in the Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (ESA-IO). This political and operational commitment is depicted in the form of military and civilian missions (EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUCAP Nestor – ended in 2015) and other cooperation programmes.

The MASE programme is fully in line with this partnership mobilization between the European Union and the ESA-IO countries for a more secured maritime and terrestrial area. Implemented by IGAD, EAC, COMESA and IOC, the MASE programme is funded by the European Union to the tune of €37, 5 million. The EU support enable partners at national and regional level to counter regional maritime security issue namely piracy.

Visit website: [EU Delegation](#) – Follow the EU Delegation on Facebook [EUinMauritius](#) and Twitter [@EUAmbMauritius](#)



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The MASE Programme

Coordinated by IGAD, the MASE Programme comprises 5 results areas and is implemented by regional organizations of the ESA-IO namely:

- Result 1 by IGAD: Addressing livelihood concerns of coastal communities against piracy in Somalia;
- Result 2 by EAC: Enhancing legal, legislative and infrastructural capabilities to combat piracy and other maritime crimes;
- Result 3 by COMESA: Dismantling financial networks linked to maritime crimes and minimizing their economic impact;
- Result 4 by IOC: Building and improving capacities for surveillance and control at sea;
- Result 5 by IOC: Promoting and coordinating exchange of maritime information.

The Regional organizations work closely with diverse actors involved in the Development and Security domains, including European missions, UN agencies (UNODC, FAO), INTERPOL ...

For more information about MASE, Consult the online brochures ([french version here](#) ; [english version here](#))

For more information about EU actions to [combat piracy, click here](#).

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