



PRESS RELEASE - PIRACY OFF SOMALIA ECSA meets with newly established EU Cell

Against the background of increasing and serious incidents of piracy and armed robbery off the coasts of Somalia, ECSA has welcomed early contact with the recently formed EU Naval Coordination Cell. The Coordination Cell was established by the EU Foreign Affairs Ministers on 15 September to support UN Resolution 1816 to improve security for vessels in that part of the world; the EU Cell is expected to be fully manned and operational in the coming weeks.

At a meeting between with the newly appointed officials from the EU Cell held in ECSA's offices in Brussels on 19th September, ECSA stressed the following priorities;

- For EU Governments to recognise the seriousness of the situation and to urgently deploy more warships to the Gulf of Aden and to the seas off the coast of Somalia with the required rules of engagement to enable direct action to be taken against the pirates.
- To provide an ongoing international basis for action, EU Member States must press to extend the UN Resolution 1816 beyond its current expiry date of 2nd December 2008, preferably for an indefinite period.
- For European shipowners to maintain and foster close links with the newly created EU Naval Coordinated Cell in order that, through exchange of information and the setting up of communication channels, it can make a valuable contribution to increasing the security of merchant and cruise vessels.

ECSA will remain in close contact with the EU Cell and put pressure on Member States for a clear engagement to act forcefully against piracy and to re-establish safety and security in these important trading seaways where European shipping companies are key players.

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If you would have any questions regarding this press release, please contact:

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