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Latest acts of piracy are renewed provocations

Nairobi, 09 April 2009 – UN Special Representative for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah has condemned the recent rash of piracy off the coast of Somalia.

“Once again, daring acts of piracy are drawing attention to the situation in Somalia,” Mr. Ould-Abdallah said. “This week alone, the hijacking of six ships—one a day—is a new record established by the pirates of Somalia. These activities, carried out sometimes nine hundred kilometers from the coast are renewed provocations to the international community. The response must be clear and firm condemnation in words and in action against this pandemic. These acts of criminality must not be allowed to follow the same path of impunity of the past.

“Deployed off the Somali coast, the international naval presence—coming from different continents—in conformity with international legality should be increased and strengthened. In the region, it is seen as a welcome show of solidarity with the countries and their population.

“These acts of piracy bring with them multiple threats to freedom of navigation, political and economic stability in the region, delivery of humanitarian assistance, and risk of environmental dimensions. Their proliferation is an insult to international legality but also an invitation to the international community to bring an appropriate and new support to the Somali authorities to help them address effectively the root causes of piracy. The link between security, political and development must be now effectively realized.”

The new Somali authorities should be helped to focus on addressing from within these root causes of piracy, Mr. Ould-Abdallah. “They should also be helped to free the unfortunate hostages—Somalis and foreigners—deprived for so long of freedom and their loved ones.”

The United Nations and the African Union, together with the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Conference and the European Union/European Commission are meeting on 23 April to support Somalia and address its security situation. “I have no doubt the results of the conference will be successful,” Mr. Ould-Abdallah said.

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