



THE MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FORSVARSMINISTERIET
DANISH MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

Piracy, including the increased number of hijackings at sea, is a serious and growing challenge to international maritime safety and thus a key challenge facing the international maritime community. As a State with a large commercial fleet operating all over the world with a substantial number of seafarers on board, Denmark has a particular interest in an intensified international effort to fight piracy.

In our view piracy constitutes a threat both to international trade and to stability in already volatile regions. This problem cannot be solved by one state alone but needs to be addressed by the international community with initiatives that match the severity and urgency of the situation. In this regard we recognize the important work undertaken in the framework of the United Nations and the International Maritime Organisation with regard to combating piracy in international waters. We strongly welcome the adoption of Security Council Resolutions 1816 and 1838.

Denmark is already engaged in the international efforts to combat piracy, including through the escort of maritime WFP relief aid transports to Somalia. Along with other States Denmark currently participates in the UN supported operation Task Force 150 which is engaged inter alia in anti-piracy activities off the coast of Eastern Africa.

Recently, Danish naval forces in Task Force 150 detained a number of suspected pirates in international waters, who were carrying equipment and weapons suited for conducting piracy. Denmark was given no other choice than to release these detainees, as it was not possible to prosecute them neither in Denmark nor in any other relevant State. This episode confirmed that third States engaged in anti-piracy activities are faced with a serious challenge regarding the handling and prosecution of persons detained in international waters and suspected of piracy or other criminal activities. An effective solution to this challenge would clearly enhance the results of our common efforts to curtail the escalating problem of piracy.

We are looking forward to your report later this month with reference to UNSCR 1816 and 1838. The main aim should in our view be to renew the authority provided in UNSCR 1816 for an additional period, but we

also hope that the report could form a basis for a discussion of questions relating to detention and prosecution of pirates.

Cooperation with the IMO is paramount in this area. Denmark will therefore also raise these issues with the IMO. From a Danish perspective the deliberations should inter alia include the establishment of a team of experts under the IMO to assist detaining States in ensuring that pirates detained at sea are prosecuted.

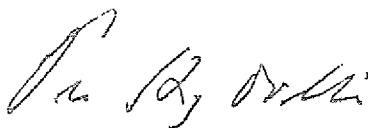
Furthermore, we would suggest that the IMO in the context of technical cooperation will give priority to the issue of the legal infrastructure in this field and the need for legal expertise in areas such as bilateral agreements on extradition and the prosecution of pirates.

Finally, we should continue to look into ways of promoting regional cooperation on this issue, including through the conclusion of regional and bilateral agreements between States on extradition and prosecution of pirate detainees. Consequently we welcome and strongly support the initiative by Governments in the East African region in co-operation with the IMO to conclude a regional agreement to prevent, deter and suppress piracy and armed robbery against ships.

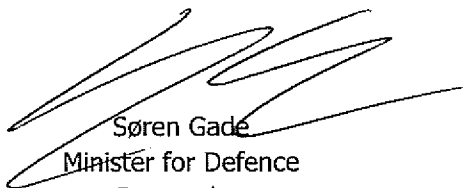
We call on you to ensure that the United Nations in cooperation with the IMO will continue to engage actively in a common effort to address these challenges.

A copy of this letter has been forwarded to the Secretary-General of the IMO.

Sincerely,



Per Stig Møller
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Denmark



Søren Gade
Minister for Defence
Denmark

H.E Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations