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FACT SHEET

Q& A's for a European Union Maritime Security Strategy

Q: Why is the Commission and the High Representative proposing only elements for a strategy?

A: One of the objectives of this process is to ensure that the Member States are fully involved in the development of this strategy. A European Union maritime security strategy cannot be developed without the involvement of Member States since many operational activities are carried out by national authorities. The Commission and the High Representative are therefore looking forward to working closely with Member States in order to deliver a full-fledged strategy. We are confident that the strategy once adopted will represent the views and interests of all stakeholders.

Q: How have Member States been involved so far?

A: The Member States already have provided substantial input through events organised at EU level and through various written contributions. Additionally, the Commission and the European External Action Service organised a stakeholder consultation in June 2013, where Member States expressed their support to the general approach. The intention is that the Joint Communication will serve as a basis for further work on shaping the strategy together with the Member States in the EU Council under the leadership of the Hellenic Presidency.

Q: What would be the purpose of such a strategy?

A: The purpose of an EU Maritime Security Strategy would be to provide a common framework for relevant authorities at national and European levels to develop further their specific policies. The aim of such a strategy would be to protect EU's strategic maritime interests and identify options to do so. Such a framework would provide the context and

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ensure coherence amongst different sector specific maritime policies and strategies. Most importantly it would significantly strengthen the link between internal and external security aspects of the maritime policy of the EU and civil and military cooperation.

Q: What are the main aims?

A: The main aims of an EU Maritime Security Strategy should be: (1) to identify and articulate the main strategic maritime interests of the EU; (2) to identify and articulate the maritime threats, challenges and risks to the strategic maritime interests of the EU; and (3) to organise the response, i.e. provide the common policy objectives, common principles and areas of common support as the backbone of the joint strategic framework in order to create coherence for the diverse and wide array of sector specific maritime policies and strategies.

Q: Does the EU only have maritime interests or does it also have a maritime responsibility?

A: It is crucial to identify the strategic maritime interests of the European Union. The global maritime domain is of vital importance to the EU and it is multi-layered. It is a crucial domain for free commerce and trade. In addition, seas and oceans are interrelated ecosystems; it is a source of resources; open seas and coastal areas are zones for tourism etc. The EU is a global actor therefore it does not only have interests, it also has to take adequate responsibility. This global responsibility has to be transformed into concrete and specific actions and to promote the respect for international law, human rights and democracy, and rules-based good governance at sea.

Q: What does the term "cross-sectoral" mean?

A: The term 'cross-sectoral' refers to actions or cooperation between different marine or maritime functions. They are still largely organised in isolation of each other and often along national lines. Modern maritime risks and threats are multifaceted and can have implications for all of these sectors involving different policies and instruments. The responses therefore should be adequately integrated and cross-sectoral in their nature. It means finding a common maritime security interest among different functions and aspects concerned.

Q: What are the sectors addressed?

A: Some of the most evident sectors are maritime safety, maritime transport, marine environment protection, fisheries control, customs, border control, law enforcement, defence, research and development and others. A 'joined up' approach to maritime policy, making these sectors work better together, can make the security policy more coherent, effective and cost efficient.

Q: What is the added value of this strategy – what will change compared to the current situation?

A: The added value of a shared strategic framework is that it provides the necessary basis to ensure coherent actions and policy development. It also facilitates the coordination of all efforts and ensures that different policies are 'joined up'. The ambition is that the EU can become more resilient in addressing threats and risks in the maritime domain and as such it

would be more capable at safeguarding its values, strategic maritime interests and promoting multilateral cooperation and maritime governance. In essence, the result of the strategy would be that maritime security activities would be much more coordinated than today. Different policy frameworks have resulted in the European Security Strategy (ESS - 2003) and the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP - 2007), which have been developing separately. Also sector specific legislation is already in place like the maritime transport security legislation - Regulation (EC) No 725/2004 on enhancing ship and port facility security and Directive 2005/65/EC on enhancing port security, the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) improving the situational awareness and reaction capability of Member States and of the EU Border Agency Frontex at the external borders - Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013), SafeSeaNet, a Union maritime traffic monitoring and information system for EU waters, managed by EU Maritime Transport agency EMSA, or the 3rd Maritime Safety Package.

Q: How will the actions, identified in this strategy, be put in practice?

This depends to a large extent on the opinion of the Member States since many of them would fall under their competence, but already existing examples with joint deployment plans and enhanced information exchange systems can eventually lead to the use of common platforms for surveillance operations. This aspect will however need to be discussed in detail with Member States.

Q: Will such a strategy promote deployment of more naval missions similar to EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA?

A: The use of all possible tools and instruments should be considered when addressing a maritime insecurity situation. Each case requires a full evaluation of the situation in order to identify the best action. In the case of the piracy attacks off the coast of Somalia, which gravely endanger shipping routes in the Gulf of Aden, the deployment of international naval forces was deemed necessary as local capacities to ensure maritime security were not available.

Q: Why is such an initiative taken now?

A: Already on 26 April 2010 the Council invited the High Representative, together with the Commission and Member States 'to undertake work with a view to preparing options for the possible elaboration of a Security Strategy for the global maritime domain'. More recently in December, 2013, the European Council called for "an EU Maritime Security Strategy by June 2014, on the basis of a Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative, taking into account the opinions of the Member States". This is the direct response to these requests.

Q: What are the next steps?

A: Based on the elements proposed by the Joint Communication from the Commission and the High Representative, an EU Maritime Security Strategy should be elaborated within the appropriate EU Council bodies and be adopted not later than in June 2014.