



G-8 Justice and Home Affairs Ministers' Declaration

The Fight against Piracy May 30, 2009

During our meeting in Rome on 28-30 May 2009, we, the Justice and Home Affairs Ministers of the G8 States, together with the European Commission, discussed the legal challenges of the fight against piracy, which is a great concern to all, with considerable consequences in terms of economy, security and regional stability. We welcomed the presentations made by UNODC and INTERPOL. We took note of the work of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coasts of Somalia, which is the main forum for coordinating international initiatives against piracy.

Under international law, States are entitled to prosecute suspected pirates. We recognized the urgent need to cooperate at the international level in order to resolve the policy and legal issues associated with the investigation and prosecution of acts of piracy in order to ensure that, where clear evidence of piracy exists, those involved in piracy can be brought to justice, thereby enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of national and international actions against piracy.

We also underlined the need for capacity building measures to strengthen the criminal justice systems in the regions where piracy occurs.

We will task our experts in cooperation and coordination with officers from other ministries, to address the legal and policy issues associated with the fight against maritime piracy and strengthen our capacity to both investigate and prosecute acts of piracy.

We focused on the need to apply fair and effective procedures to govern the investigation, arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators of pirate attacks, in full compliance with the principle of due process of law and the human rights of defendants.

We emphasized the importance that States affected by piracy – e. g. because the targeted ships are flying their flag, or because crew members or passengers are their nationals – submit cases for prosecution, where appropriate. We acknowledged that arrangements between States that interdict pirates, and States willing and able to prosecute them, play a valuable role in the counter-piracy efforts.

We encouraged policies to deprive the pirates of the proceeds of their criminal activity, including concerted action to recover assets illegally obtained by pirates in accordance with our domestic laws.

Finally, we decided to give our full support to international activities aimed at ensuring an adequate legal tool box in the fight against piracy.