



PROMOTING A FUTURE OF  
PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST  
Maritime and Aviation Security Working Group  
Bahrain | October 21-22

Working Group Summary Statement

## **Maritime and Aviation Security Working Group Manama, Bahrain, October 21-22**

The United States, Poland and Bahrain co-hosted the Maritime and Aviation Security Working Group on October 21-22, 2019, in Manama, Bahrain, fulfilling a commitment made at the Ministerial to Advance Peace and Security in the Middle East in February 2019 in Warsaw, Poland. This working group focused on ways states can promote maritime and aviation security in the region, with an emphasis on steps states can take to interdict and prevent illicit weapons of mass destruction (WMD)-related shipments. The working group focused on two primary pillars. The first related to building national capacity to conduct interdictions as it relates to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and its Statement of Interdiction Principles. The second focused on how states can increase subscription to existing international arrangements that establish critical standards for curbing shipments of WMD-related items of proliferation concern.

There is a general agreement that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials by air, land, and sea, remains a threat to international peace and security. In this regard, the working group noted that the PSI is a tool in the fight to prevent such proliferation. Capitalizing on the momentum generated at this meeting, states discussed ways to improve their individual and collective interdiction capabilities through regional, bilateral and global activities, exercises, workshops, actual interdictions as they occur, and continuous reassessments of the proliferation environment. States also discussed the importance of continuing to operate strictly within international law, as they work to meet their international obligations, to prevent WMD proliferation under various treaties and United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), and to strengthen their domestic legal authorities to enable strong action when the situation demands.

Additionally, the working group discussed ways to strengthen their capacities to impede and prosecute the trafficking of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials by discussing the 2005 Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation ("2005 SUA Protocols") and the 2005 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf ("2005 Fixed Platforms Protocol"). Participants also discussed the importance of states cooperating on these issues through capacity-building partnerships that help facilitate the improvement of national capabilities and encourages effective implementation of best practices in these areas.

Also, the working group discussed enhancing the participation of states in existing international nonproliferation arrangements that promote regional stability and security, including enforcement of UNSCRs such as UNSCR 1540. The working group discussed developing the domestic legal and regulatory authorities required under UNSCR 1540 that will increase the

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ability to enforce the resolution, interdict shipments of WMD proliferation concern, and increase maritime security.

The working group discussed the importance of UNSCR enforcement and the need for Member states to continue to implement the various UNSCR provisions to enforce existing sanctions and improve their national capacities to conduct interdictions. Additionally, the working group discussed illicit air and maritime transfers of conventional arms and the various country specific UNSC resolutions. The working group concluded with a discussion on what states can do to secure maritime and aerial transportation against threats to them.

Lastly, delegations discussed the future of the PSI as one of the tools to combat WMD proliferation. They reiterated the call to endorsing states to continue examining ways to strengthen national laws, including on export control, and international mechanisms with the capacity to effectively curb WMD proliferation alleged activities. The discussions reaffirmed that WMD proliferation poses a shared global challenge and countering the threat continues to require contributions from all partners.

The following countries contributed to the working group summary statement:

1. Australia
2. Bahrain
3. Belgium
4. Brazil
5. Cyprus
6. Egypt
7. France
8. Germany
9. Greece
10. Israel
11. Italy
12. Japan
13. Jordan
14. Kuwait
15. Morocco
16. Netherlands
17. Norway
18. Oman
19. Philippines
20. Poland
21. Saudi Arabia
22. Slovakia
23. South Korea
24. Sweden
25. Thailand
26. Tunisia
27. United Arab Emirates
28. United Kingdom
29. United States

30. Yemen