International Cooperation to Safeguard Critical Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs)

Submitted by: Singapore
International Co-operation to Safeguard Critical Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs)

By Mary Seet-Cheng
Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore

APEC STAR III Conference,
Incheon, Korea, 25-26 Feb 2005

INTRODUCTION

- APEC STAR: Extensive yet Focused Coverage of Key Security Issues

- Vital Maritime Security Issues of ISPS Code, Container Security, and safeguarding of SLOCs

- Similarities between APEC STAR and MPA’s approach to Maritime Security
MPA’s Maritime Security Framework

- Comprehensive Approach to Maritime Security:
  - ISPS Code – Ship and Port Facilities;
  - Beyond the ISPS Code – Port Security covering small craft (non-SOLAS vessels), port waters and areas not covered by the Code;
  - Cargo Security Programmes; and
  - SLOC Security - Contributed to co-operative efforts for SLOC (Malacca and Singapore Straits).

- Sharing of MPA’s experiences in these areas at various APEC fora, including STAR

Critical SLOCs: Malacca and Singapore Straits

- Critical SLOCs: Enable free flow of maritime commerce and energy supplies

- Straits of Malacca and Singapore
  - Among the busiest and most important SLOCs
  - 2\textsuperscript{nd} highest volume of oil transported through
  - Shortest sea route between Asia-Pacific and Middle East/Europe
  - Straits are of great importance to many stakeholders
Threats to Malacca and Singapore Straits

Both Navigational Safety and Security Concerns

Navigational Safety Threats:
- Increase in usage and traffic volume, bigger vessels
- Increased risk of navigational and pollution accidents
- Disruptions as devastating as those from security threats

Security Threats
- Sea borne piracy and armed robbery against ships
- 2004: 160 reported piracy incidents in Southeast Asia, quarter of incidents (45) occurred in the Straits
- Post-Sep 11: Possible Nexus between piracy and maritime terrorism

Co-operative Initiatives for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

Navigational Safety
- Traditionally strong co-operation
- Tripartite Technical Experts Group (TTEG) - Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore
- Effective and expedient implementation of safety measures e.g. Traffic Separation Scheme, STRAITREP
- Successful co-operation with stakeholders e.g. IMO and Japan
Co-operative Initiatives for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

**Maritime Security**
- Trilateral Co-ordinated Patrols
- Indonesia-Singapore Co-ordinated Patrols
- Multilateral initiatives:
  - ASEAN Regional Forum series of Maritime Security meetings – S’pore, 2-4 Mar 05
  - Five Power Defence Arrangement: Activities to include maritime terrorism

Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

- Past and existing co-operation demonstrate the *necessity as well as the collective responsibility* of stakeholders to contribute in maintaining the Straits.
- However, more can, and needs to be, done.
- Maritime threats – Not static, can only increase in complexity.
  - *What more can be done, and how?*
Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

- Basic principle: The primary responsibility for the safety and security of the Straits lies with the three littoral States of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

- But there are many stakeholders, and they also have a part to play.

- The key is to find the appropriate modalities for co-operation between the littoral States and stakeholders – modalities which respect national sovereignty and proceed within the bounds of international law.

- Three possible modalities.....

Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

- **UNCLOS and TTEG Familiarisation Meetings**

  - UNCLOS Art 43: Co-operation between user States and coastal States to maintain straits used for international navigation such as the Malacca and Singapore Straits.

  - Two Straits Conf's in Singapore in 1996 and 1999: Consensus that littoral States collectively appeal for voluntary contributions for maintenance of the Straits.

  - TTEG developed Straits safety initiatives for project funding by Straits stakeholders. Familiarisation Meetings to bring stakeholders on board the initiative.
Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

**UNCLOS and TTEG Familiarisation Meetings**
- First TTEG Familiarisation Meeting successfully held in Dec 04 in Jakarta. Participants from China, Japan, ROK and three littoral States
- Agreement - Develop Straits Users Forum, and next Familiarisation Meeting
- Momentum for international co-operation
- Second TTEG Familiarisation Meeting – Plans to convene in Apr 05
- Expand scope and numbers of user States participation, and advance concept of Straits Users Forum

Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

**Regional Co-operation Agreement on Anti-Piracy in Asia (ReCAAP)**
- Inter-governmental anti-piracy initiative launched by Japan in 2001
- Three components of information sharing, operational cooperation, and capacity building
- Information Sharing main pillar of ReCAAP
- 10 ASEAN States, Japan, China, Korea, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka
Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

**Regional Co-operation Agreement on Anti-Piracy in Asia (ReCAAP)**

- Establishment of Information Sharing Centre - Hub of Information Network comprising Focal Points of ReCAAP members
- ISC facilitate communications and information exchange between govt. Enforce co-operation among law enforcement agencies
- Expediting establishment of ISC in Singapore. Inter-govt outfit comprising officers from ReCAAP members.
- Multilateral framework for enhancing anti-piracy co-operation, and contributes to the overall maritime security environment in the Asia-Pacific.

Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

**IMO “Protection of Vital Shipping Lanes” Initiative**

- IMO Secretary-General launched an initiative to find a multilateral solution to secure vital SLOCs against threats such as maritime terrorism.
- The Malacca and Singapore Straits identified as a key area
- IMO-sponsored meeting in Jakarta this year to further develop co-operation for the Straits
Way Ahead: Future Co-operation for the Malacca and Singapore Straits

- IMO “Protection of Vital Shipping Lanes” Initiative
  - IMO proposals to consider “ways and means to enhance safety, security and environmental protection in the Strait of Malacca” through “awareness increasing; information sharing; personnel training; and capacity building”
  - Singapore supports this initiative of the IMO to develop platforms for co-operation in the Straits
  - The IMO SG in Singapore next week for ARF CBM on Maritime Security, and we look forward to his plans for the meeting in Jakarta

Conclusion

- The three highlighted modalities - not separate initiatives.
- They are an interlinked network of co-operative arrangements between the littoral States and stakeholders of the Malacca and Singapore Straits.
- The urgency to secure our SLOCs and the political commitment of all involved will help bring these initiatives to their full potential.
Thank you