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**Stakeholders meeting on maritime piracy in Somali Coast  
28 January 2009**

**Mr. Calvani Welcome Remarks**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome!

It's a pleasure for me to be here today to open, the "Stakeholders meeting on maritime piracy in Somali coast".

I would like to thank the CRT Foundation for hosting this event, the International Propeller Club for the support and contribution and the Italian Navy for its cooperation and for having accepted to chair the meeting. I would also like to thank UNOSAT for its participation, our counterpart in UNICRI programme on maritime piracy.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for being present today, representatives of International Organizations, Governments and military personnel, academia and private actors. All of you are here today due to your commitment to contribute in a concrete way to prevent and counter maritime piracy.

UNICRI is a leading UN Institution, a leader of change management tests and a source of applied research, documentation, training and networking in relation to organized crime and emerging crimes. The Institute is particularly well equipped to forge alliances between entities within the UN system, national governments, leading researchers as well as NGOs and privates, developing and implementing immediate responses to new global threats as soon as they emerge.

In its 40 years of work, UNICRI has supported governments and the international community in tackling the threat of crime to development and stability and in strengthening human rights. The Institute has been always at the forefront of justice reform, crime prevention, victim protection and innovative security policies. In the recent years, UNICRI has tested and implemented promising practices in the field of public private partnerships to counter more efficiently emerging global threats.

And maritime piracy is one of them. Even if we are talking about a criminal phenomenon with a long history, it's presently becoming a "hot topic" due to its increased impact on social, economic and security sectors and its widened scope. Pirate attacks constitute not only a direct threat to the lives of people on board, but can also undermine sea trading abilities and hamper the legitimacy of political regimes by encouraging illicit traffics and corruption. Moreover, attacks have the potential to trigger major environmental disasters, particularly if they take place in crowded waters.

The waters around the Horn of Africa are currently becoming areas of increased concern. U.S., French, Spanish, Saudi and Italian ships, among others, have been targets of pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden during whole 2008.

Contemporary piracy is a booming criminal activity, not only because of its high profitability with an extremely positive cost-benefit balance for the perpetrators, but also due to the acute vulnerability of targets, lack of training and awareness and specific countermeasures.

UNICRI today initiative and the programme proposal we will present you during the afternoon session, have been designed within the framework of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1816 and 1846 (2008) which authorize a series of decisive measures to combat the acts of piracy against vessels off the coast of Somalia and create a permissive regime whereby non-Somali naval vessels may enforce the law of the sea rules on piracy in Somali territorial sea, with expressed authorization from the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia. The Resolutions are based on existing International Conventions – broad enough to cover crimes committed at sea – such as the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (1974), the Hostage Taking Convention (1979), the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) and on the Convention for the

Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (1988).

More and foremost, the International Community has at its disposal the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted in 2000 which can be a fundamental tool of international cooperation, prevention and fight against maritime piracy when associated with “organized criminal activities”, such as, among the others, participation in criminal groups, money laundering and corruption.

Main purpose of the present meeting is to share knowledge and plans between the major players, present here today, who internationally deal with maritime piracy in order to build a stronger and shared programme focusing on crime prevention, fully in line with UN mandates. The tools proposed are: knowledge management, intelligence sharing and cooperation, training and involvement of the local community. All these actions will be conducted within UN Conventions and resolutions, keeping in mind Governmental and private partners needs.

We do not intend to overlap with other International Organizations mandates and activities. We would like to put at the service of the International Community our longstanding experience in crime prevention and criminal justice knowledge management competences, as well as that on public/private partnership and rapidly respond to the threats posed by maritime piracy today. We can't wait for long term responses, the threat is now and we want and we can respond now.

I have the pleasure to leave the floor now to Admiral Callini of the Italian Navy who will introduce Italian efforts in the fight against maritime piracy and will, then, chair the morning session during which we would like to provide participants with an overview of the maritime piracy phenomenon, worldwide and, in particular, in the Somali coast.

Thank you and good work!