RECOMMENDATIONS TO SEAFARERS

EUNAVFOR ASPIDES can provide support to Motor Vessels (MVs) transiting its Area of Operation (AoO), which encompasses Red Sea (RS), Gulf of Aden (GOA), Arabian Sea (AS) and Arabian Gulf (AG). Recommendations below shall be adopted by all MVs, especially when supported by ASPIDES naval ships.

In order to safeguard both the supported and the supporting ship' security, recommendations in bold should be considered as vital/essential, hence strictly observed.
Non adherence to these rules may lead to the non-granting or interruption of the support provided.
All actions should be executed, keeping the safety of navigation as a priority.

<u>**COMPANIES AND MVs SHOULD:**</u>

A. **BEFORE SAILING OFF THE YEMEN COASTS, IN THE RS AND THE GOA:**
   1. **Register with MSCHOA (Maritime Security Centre - Horn of Africa – https://at-sea.mschoa.org).**
   2. **If planning to request support, fill the dedicated form, according to the instructions available on the website** (https://at-sea.mschoa.org/aspides/), **as soon as possible and at least 7 days before entering into the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden.**
   3. Following most recent threats (see MSCHoA website https://at-sea.mschoa.org/aspides/), **conduct a thorough analysis of past port calls** made in Israeli ports, Med or RS, not at vessel-level, but at company level. Conduct a risk assessment of all vessels, and especially those that may have any previous US, UK, or Israel association. **If such an association is made, shipping companies are recommended to provide the information to MSCHOA, prior to transiting the threat area.**
   4. Review/reduce public digital footprint of the concerned MVs; update registered ownership, management and operator data in vessel-tracking services, available to the public.
   5. Ensure reception of this guidance and adherence to it.
   6. Consider reviewing security plan with appropriate measures.
   7. Conduct drills onboard prior to approaching Yemen coasts, including an SSAS (Ship Security Alert System) test.
   8. If contacted by any organization not officially recognized, report back to your company security officer and validate the source before responding. Any response to be carefully considered.

B. **THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE VOYAGE:**
   1. **Consider recommendations provided by Best Management Practices (BMP), version 5.**
   2. *"Turning AIS Off saves lives".* **Since February 2024, 85% of the vessels that were targeted had their AIS On, while only 5% of the vessels that were hit had their AIS Off.**
      Taking into account the risk balance between safety and security, in accordance with SOLAS Chapter XI-2, Regulation 8, consider **switching OFF AIS and LRIT** (in accordance with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19 and 19-1). Do this **as soon as possible before entering the area of concern, as early as West of meridian 60E / north of parallel 10N (when heading West), or entering the RS from Suez (when heading South).**
      This is valid also for entering and stationing in the Port of Djibouti, as recommended by local authorities. Instead of AIS, report by phone to the Djiboutian Navy Command through phone at +253 21355721 or e-mail through ccomdjibouti@yahoo.fr
      AIS and LRIT should be switched back ON after leaving this area of danger.

3. **After switching OFF AIS, alter course/speed as soon as possible**, to prevent any calculation of the MV's future position.
4. **Ignore VHF calls and e-mails from "Yemeni Navy" or the "Humanitarian Operations Command Center" (HOCC).**
5. Note anything suspicious (e.g. approaching skiffs, suspicious hailing on VHF, explosions, etc.), and report it to postmaster@mschoa.org. Anonymity of vessel/crew is guaranteed.
6. **Do not use VHF to communicate with supporting ships but prefer direct chat systems, e-mails, satellite comms or INTERCO (Do not use THURAYA).**
7. In all situations, an effective lookout and enhanced vigilance are paramount for ships' security. If a security team is onboard, consider using them to enhance vigilance.

C. TRANSITING THE AREA OF CONCERN:
1. **Ignore orders / phone calls not coming from supporting ships**, as the coordination with other security providers and other NCAGS (Naval Cooperation and Guidance for Shipping) entities in the area is executed by ASPIDES authorities.
2. **Choose routes far from the Yemeni coast** (particularly remaining West of Hanish Islands) and make wide detours around the southern islands of the RS.
3. Consider sailing off the International Recommended Transit Corridor, as several attacks have happened along it.
4. Generally, prefer day transits in the South RS to maximize vigilance and **night transits through Bab el Mandeb** to avoid identification by skiffs/assets patrolling in the area. **At night, consider switching off all unnecessary lights**.
5. **Alter course and speed often**, in order to hamper the targeting process. Targeting can be estimated by using last course and speed, as reported by AIS or other sources.
6. Only essential crew should remain on the navigation deck. All crew members should stay as far away as possible from the hull of the ship.
7. When under support by ASPIDES's units, **all actions conducted by Private Maritime Security Companies (ISO 28007 – 1:2015) must be coordinated with the Commanding Officer of ASPIDES naval ship**, who has a clearer view of the tactical situation.
8. In case of incidents (e.g. impacts, unmanned vehicles approaching, suspicious activities, etc.), report all details to MSCHoA (postmaster@mschoa.org), with recordings/pictures, if available.

D. IN CASE OF ANY UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE AND/OR DEBRIS ON DECK:
1. **Maintain a safe distance and cordon the area off.**
2. **Do not touch or try to dismantle any debris.**
3. Be aware that radio emissions may trigger the device.
4. Request assistance through MSCHOA, by including pictures, if available, maintaining a safe stand-off distance.

HOW TO REQUEST FOR SUPPORT
All requests for support must be sent to postmaster@mschoa.org (24/7)**, as soon as possible and at least 7 days before entering into the RS and the GOA.**
ASPIDES webpage is available on the MSCHOA website (https://at-sea.mschoa.org/aspides), where additional information (e.g. threat update) can be found.