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A Small Island Understanding of Maritime Security: The Cases of Mauritius and Seychelles

James A. Malcolm¹ & Linganaden Murday²

The inclusion of a Sustainable Development Goal (No. 14) on the oceans provides a formal and global recognition that the effective management of the blue economy is a key plank of global development efforts. For island states, the importance of the maritime domain is unquestionable with many having responsibility for, and access to, vast areas of ocean. In the Indian Ocean region, island states have increasingly recognised this situation by placing greater emphasis on ocean policy and the opportunities the maritime domain offers. Yet the successful nurturing of the maritime domain relies, upon other things, on maintaining effective maritime security; be that responding to global challenges such as climate change or tackling transnational organised crime. Here island states inevitably face challenges as their smaller size often means they lack the capacity to enhance their maritime domain awareness and effectively respond to insecurity, whilst they often have complex relationships with larger, external actors, to manage. This paper seeks to shed further light on the maritime security considerations – their characteristics and influencing factors - of island states in the Indian Ocean. To do this the paper first undertakes a content analysis of key documents to examine the way in which maritime security challenges have been publicly communicated by island states in the region. With this complete, the paper utilises additional documents and interview material to elaborate the way in which two specific states – Mauritius and Seychelles – have approached their maritime security, recognising both states' vibrant economy's and their active interest in developing their blue economies. In doing this the paper provides valuable insights in to the way in which policy makers in Indian Ocean island states understand the sustainable development-maritime security relationship.

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Our Exclusive Economic Zone and territorial waters, our surrounding islands, national interests and security imperatives, regional commitments and an extremely dynamic geo-strategic environment are giving rise to many challenges. The maritime realm is vulnerable to a wide array of threats, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, environmental degradation, smuggling, drug trafficking, piracy, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and dreadful acts, including terrorism. **Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius** (Le Mauricien 2016)

Maritime security is a central component of the blue economy and Seychelles and the whole region of East and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean should make maritime security, which is combatting all forms of maritime threats, including piracy, a core component of its national and regional security. **Ralph Agrippine, Seychelles Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (Seychelles News Agency 2016)

Introduction

The Indian Ocean is a vast space of approximately 73.4 million square kilometres, making up circa 20% of the world's total ocean area (Columbia Encyclopedia 6th Edition at Encyclopedica.com n.d.). The sheer size of the Ocean, its strategic location between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, alongside the vast array of states with some claim on it, has ensured that the Indian Ocean's significance for geopolitics, global trade and as a source of natural resources is considerable. As such, insecurity in the Indian Ocean has the propensity to have negative implications for state and human security, and well beyond the coastal states and island communities associated with the Ocean itself. More specifically, Somali piracy illustrated the challenges posed when maritime insecurity negatively impinged on global sea routes, clear evidence of how instability on land, here in Somalia, can play out into criminality in the maritime domain (Treves 2009; Kellerman 2011; Guilfoyle 2013; Percy and Shortland 2013).

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For Seychelles and Mauritius, arguably the two most politically stable and economically prosperous island states in the Indian Ocean; Somali piracy highlighted the negative consequences that a lack of good governance and effective law enforcement associated with the maritime domain could have. Both countries for example also undertook the burden of stepping in to facilitate the prosecution and jailing of pirates with Somalia's judicial system inadequate to the task (Reuters 2012; BBC 2013). Yet beyond piracy, the consequences of insecurity at sea and the need to effectively respond to it, has been increasingly acknowledged by both countries. Captured in the quotations laid out at the beginning of this journal article, former Mauritian Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth, speaking on the visit of the Indian Defence Minister to the island in December 2016, noted the wider array of security challenges associated with the maritime domain (Le Mauricien 2016). Whilst the Director General for Protocol, Treaties and Consular Affairs at the Seychelles Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ralph Agrippine, speaking in an interview to the Seychelles News Agency (SNA) in the context of the imminent end of NATO's anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean, noted that maritime threats went beyond piracy and were crucial to the blue economy (Seychelles News Agency 2016a).

Both reflections represent public articulations illustrating the way in which the state thinks about maritime security in these two small island states. More generally, for small island states' globally their national security is inextricably wrapped up in maritime security, yet these states also often face challenges when seeking to enhance maritime security as their smaller size can mean they lack the capacity to improve their maritime domain awareness and effectively respond to insecurity. Moreover,

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smaller states often have complex relationships with larger, external actors to manage that can shape policy and practice (Reiter and Gartner 2001; Ingebritsen et al. 2006). The need for maritime security is thus self-evident, but the means of attaining, enhancing and sustaining maritime security can be less clear cut.

Recognising and seeking to explore this situation, this article looks at developments since the turn of the decade and answers the question, '*What are the maritime security considerations of Seychelles and Mauritius?*' The article sheds light on how each country has publicly articulated the importance of its maritime domain, the threats associated with that domain, and maps out the main contours of the institutional and policy responses instigated by each state over the last decade in order to respond to maritime insecurity. The overall objective is, through the use of the case study approach, to elaborate how these two small island states specifically navigate their responsibilities in this area thus providing a clearer picture of maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean.

The article argues that overall for these two island states maritime security thinking and activity has been wrapped up in sustainable development efforts, and specifically the growth and exploitation of the blue economy. In short sustainability is understood as a central route to maritime security and vice versa. Beyond concern about the negative implications of climate change, both states have highlighted and sought to respond to a range of maritime security challenges. The threat of armed violence associated with the maritime domain, specifically Somali piracy, was the most prominent concern in the late 2000's, yet as multi-national efforts to respond to this

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challenge suppressed pirate activity, the damage caused by wider illicit activities such as drug trafficking by sea or illegal fishing has gained greater recognition.

The article then describes how both Seychelles and Mauritius have responded to this maritime security context, arguing their responses encapsulate a combination of the development and implementation of new strategies, the establishment or reform of departmental and security structures, embracing multi-national partnerships, alongside the implementation of a variety of new working practices. Collectively the article concludes that both states clearly recognise the importance of maritime security to their wider development efforts, each has demonstrated a combination of proactivity and reactivity in the area, and both still have maritime security capacity building needs. Finally, the article posits, a further and even deeper examination of the way in which small island states in general, and these two cases in particular have navigated their maritime security challenges could provide a useful additional case study to better understand the role and interactions of small states in International Relations as a whole.

To advance this argument the chosen methodology for the article is outlined next, with the use of a case study of Seychelles and Mauritius elaborated and justified. With this complete the broader context in which the case study sits is charted. More specifically, the article places concern about maritime security amidst wider efforts at attaining sustainable development within the Small Island Developing State (SIDS) community. With the context established the article pivots towards the case study proper. The article highlights the importance of the maritime domain to Seychelles

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and Mauritius and notes the key trends with regards to the main threats to maritime security that have been publicly articulated by the state in both countries in the last decade. The article then maps out the main state actors given responsibility for maritime security issues. Collectively this provides an up-to-date security picture and enables the considerable similarities between the two states to be highlighted.

Recognising that there remain differences of emphasis and prioritisation between the two states, and in order to facilitate deeper analysis; the article shifts to a more detailed focus on state responses to two specific threats. First, Seychelles' response to concerns around piracy is examined, whilst the section on Mauritius focuses on the response to drugs trafficking by sea. Within both of these sections, the article explains how threats have been publicly articulated, and then examines the response from each state to that presented threat. The article draws to a close by flagging up the key issues emerging from the case study for those interested in both maritime security and the role of small states in global affairs.

Methodology

The article utilises the case study approach in order to shed light on the maritime security considerations of Seychelles and Mauritius. A case study can be defined as '...a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event' (Bogdan and Biklen 1982, p. 58 in Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007, p. 81), and provides an opportunity to add focus to a study whilst capturing the wider context and 'complexities of real-life situations' (Zainal 2007, p. 4). This emphasis on wider context and complexity rests on an

acknowledgement that 'all of evidence is of some value, and this value (trustworthiness) has to be carefully appraised' (Gillham 2000, p. 10). Here then we seek to shed light on threat perception and policy responses in the specific area of maritime security, by two cases of small island states, and in the context of responses to Somali piracy and the emergence of a national focus on blue growth. In doing this we endeavour to capture the fluidity and complexity of designing and implementing an effective response in the arguably high priority area of national security.

Given the limitation of space, this article's case study is exploratory in nature and should be considered as a pilot study in to how island states in the Indian Ocean approach maritime security. The case study is given added rigour through the use of multiple cases – Seychelles and Mauritius – deepening analysis and facilitating some comparative work. Moreover, the article focuses on the eight year period since the turn of the decade (2009-2016) recognising the way in which concern over Somali piracy and national efforts to develop the blue economy have placed maritime security higher on the agenda of both countries in this time and the need for an up-to-date security picture. Despite the fact that the Indian Ocean is far from a homogenous region (Cordner 2010, p. 16), there are more similarities than differences between the two countries. Both countries share a similar colonial past and were part of the same administration under the British. Both are democracies, the most economically prosperous islands in the Indian Ocean, and have tourism as a key component of their economic model. Both island states are trying to play a leadership role in the Indian Ocean in the maritime security field. Furthermore both are members of international organisations in Africa and the Indian Ocean which influence their perception and

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response to maritime security threats. Thus they both socialise to those organisations and absorb the ideas emitted. Indeed both have also regularly discussed the shared management of part of the Mascarene Plateau region.ⁱ Finally, both have identified the ocean as the next frontier that will enable them to further develop their economies.

The article also draws upon multiple sources of evidence to deepen the case study. Data collection principally focuses on documentary analysis with strategy and policy papers alongside ministerial speeches on the ocean economy and maritime security issues examined.ⁱⁱ Supplementing these documents were articles from the popular press in both countries published during 2015 and 2016. These helped to bring the case study up to date, highlighted the general mood around maritime security and directed us to additional official documents and speeches of relevance. More specifically, for the Seychelles the online versions of both the 'Seychelles News Agency' and 'Seychelles Nation' were consulted. In the case of Mauritius the 'L'Express' and 'Le Mauricien' daily newspapers were utilised with hard copy archives accessed via the National Library. In addition to documentary analysis insights were gained from a series of informal discussions and semi-structured interviews with policy and security personnel in both Seychelles and Mauritius, all of which clarified our thinking. Interviews in Mauritius were conducted during a scoping research visit by one author in August 2015, with informal discussions with individuals from both islands conducted by the other author in 2016 and 2017 as the article was drafted.

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Recognising that a prominent criticism of the case study approach is the issue of generalisation (Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007, pp. 83-84), the article's focus is limited to highlighting key trends in how the state in both cases articulates their thoughts on maritime security, whilst examining the more detailed response to two of these presented threats – piracy and drugs trafficking by sea. We do not claim that the response to either specific maritime security threat is necessarily duplicated in relation to other threats, nor do we argue that all small island states have embarked on the same specific pathway in relation to maritime security. We do however conclude that there may be valuable insights that can be taken from this case study for those interested in how small states approach global affairs, but argue more widespread research is required. Ultimately we share the view held by Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007, p. 84) that 'people reading case studies can often relate to them, even if they cannot always generalize from them', and therefore hope the insights provided shed some light on this topic and provoke interest and further research.

Sustainability as Maritime Security

Seychelles and Mauritius are both members of the international Small Island Developing States (SIDS) community. For this group of islands, a significant emphasis on the international policy stage has been to highlight the very real, and in certain cases existential threat posed by climate change. The 'Agenda 21, Rio Declaration on Development and Environment', had at its heart a claim by the international community that, 'humanity stands at a defining moment in history' (UN

1992, para. 1.1), with a series of challenges including the 'continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being' prominent (UN 1992, para. 1.1). The Agenda 21 document also highlighted the wider implications of these challenges noting that,

integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfilment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future (UN 1992, para. 1.1).

This explicit connection between the environment, development and human wellbeing captured a wider effort within the United Nations' structures to publicly conceptualise security in more comprehensive terms. Indeed in 1994 the UN Development Programme introduced the concept of 'human security' in to popular terminology seeking, in their own words, to equate 'security with people rather than territories, with development rather than arms' (UNDP n.d.). SIDS were themselves formally recognised as '...a special case both for environment and development' (UN 1992) at the Rio Summit. Against this backdrop SIDS have met collectively on a periodic basis to discuss their sustainable development needs. The first such international conference took place in Barbados in 1994, the second took place in Mauritius in 2005, whilst the third took place in Fiji in 2014. The importance of the oceans and seas have been recognised in discussions across this near 25 year period with the Samoa 2014 conference outcome document having a specific section on the maritime domain. More specifically the document noted that:

Healthy, productive and resilient oceans and coasts are critical for, inter alia, poverty eradication, access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, livelihoods, economic development and essential ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, and represent an important element of identity and culture for the people of small island developing States. Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism, the possible use of seabed resources and potential sources of renewable energy are among the main building blocks of a sustainable ocean-based economy in small island developing States (UN 2014, para. 13).

The goal of growing and sustaining a viable ocean-based economy – the blue economy – recognises that SIDS often have access to and rights over vast swathes of oceans and seas. Today, the oceans are the principle focus of the 14th goal for Sustainable Development committed to by the international community in 2015 as a successor regime to the Millennium Development Goals (UN n.d.), whilst there is arguably a maritime dimension to other goals too (Chapsos 2017). The inevitable challenge for SIDS however is that the vast swathe of waters need managing, and they often have limited resources and overall capacity to do this effectively. These governance challenges also open up opportunities for the maritime domain to be exploited by those with ill intent. This can have real, negative implications for SIDS and their populations as we witness the diminishing of state and human security (Chapsos and Malcolm 2017).

By taking a closer look at the outcome documents from the SIDS conferences and their associated periodic reviews, we can further clarify the mutual relationship between sustainable development and maritime security for island states like Seychelles and Mauritius. Organised violence, environmental threats beyond climate change, and maritime crime have all been highlighted by SIDS with illegal fishing a

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crime particularly noted (Malcolm 2017). The 1999 Barbados+5 review document for example emphasised that Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fishing must be addressed ‘...to ensure essential sources of food supplies for island populations and economic development’ (UN 1999). At a regional level the ‘Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea’ (AIMS) grouping of SIDS that Seychelles and Mauritius are part, have for example emphasised the negative consequences of piracy.ⁱⁱⁱ In the regional synthesis document, published in 2010 as part of the five year review of the Mauritius conference, the Executive Summary notes,

Piracy in the Western Indian Ocean is a major security concern for AIMS countries in the region. Limited initially in the region off Somalia, it has now extended south of the equator. In Seychelles, fishing activities alone are reported to have declined by 54% from January to August 2009 due to the risk of piracy (AIMS 2010, p. 2).

In a similar vein and more recently, in September 2015 Premdut Koonjoo, Mauritian Minister of Ocean Economy, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands, flagged maritime security as a challenge to ‘the sustainability of our economic development agenda’ at an Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) conference (Koonjoo 2015). The Minister emphasised how the region had to deal with ‘the persistent scourge of piracy off [the] coast of Somalia and the challenges it posed to private sector development, regional and international trade, economic integration and development’ (Koonjoo 2015). Furthermore, in the Seychelles’ national report to the 2015 Fiji UN SIDS conference, the country explicitly noted that ‘the Seychelles continues to see peace and security as one of the most important enablers for sustainable development’ (Republic of Seychelles 2013, p. 17). Indeed speaking to the UN General Assembly in September 2015 Seychelles President James Michel noted,

For oceanic nations the sea is our lifeblood and the Blue Economy is the catalyst upon which we learn to thrive. But we cannot thrive in an environment of insecurity. Maritime security is of the utmost importance to the vast majority of SIDS and to coastal states (Republic of Seychelles 2015, p. 3).^{iv}

These direct references to, and reflections about, maritime security have grown in recent years in policy circles, just as they have within the academic community. Regional blocs such as the African Union and European Union, alongside individual states like the United Kingdom have published strategies reflecting on the security dimension of the maritime domain (African Union 2014; European Union 2014; United Kingdom 2014). Each strategy firmly highlights the importance of the maritime domain economically, politically, environmentally, and culturally, and as such notes more diverse threats associated with that domain. Intellectually the emergence of maritime security represents a broadening of the conceptualisation of security in the maritime domain beyond naval power towards non-traditional threats and the role of non-state actors (Bueger 2015; Malcolm and Chapsos 2017). This more comprehensive understanding of maritime security is captured well in the 2008 UN Secretary-General's 'Report on the Oceans and the Law of the Sea' where terrorist acts against ships and offshore installations, piracy and armed robbery against ships, illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, alongside the smuggling of people by sea, were all highlighted and discussed (UN 2008).

Securing the maritime domain in Seychelles and Mauritius

In recognising that for small island states like Seychelles and Mauritius maritime security considerations are inextricably wrapped up in sustainable development efforts, and by noting the diversity of possible threats to the maritime domain; we have the backdrop against which the maritime security considerations of both countries are played out. As the transition to the case study begins, it is worth reflecting on the size of the expanse of the Indian Ocean that each country has some responsibility for in order to understand both the huge potential for their respective blue economies, and the space that has to be secured.

Seychelles' population is one of the smallest in the world at approximately 87,400. Its total land area is just 451 km², yet it is responsible for an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of approximately 1.3 million km² (Republic of Seychelles 2013, p. 6). Economically the country is reliant on tourism with this industry representing 68% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2012 (Republic of Seychelles 2013, p. 7). The Seychelles' principle sustainable development mechanism is the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020 (SSDS 2012-2020), a document that organises activity around 13 thematic areas including 'Fisheries and Marine Resources' (Republic of Seychelles 2012). Indeed the strategy emphasises that the Seychelles are 'economically dependent upon its fishery resources', noting that 'maritime security and enforcement of illegal and unreported fisheries will remain a major challenge' to the country (Republic of Seychelles 2012, p. 11).

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Mauritius meanwhile has a population of approximately 1.3 million people, a total land area of 2040 km², and an EEZ of approximately 2.3 million km² (Republic of Mauritius 2013, p. 5). In 2008 Mauritius adopted the 'Maurice Ile Durable' project for a sustainable vision to national development (Republic of Mauritius 2013, p. 11). This sits alongside an 'Economic and Social Transformation Plan' for the country (Republic of Mauritius 2013, p. 5) and the country's 2030 vision. Launched in 2015, the 2030 vision aims to bring about a second economic miracle and reduce the increasing level of unemployment in Mauritius. More specifically, the Ocean Economy sector is central for realising this 'miracle' which, according to governmental estimates, will create 25,000 jobs between 2015 and 2020 (Jugnauth, 2015, p.17). Policy makers in Mauritius are conscious that there are several challenges to the ocean economy project, one of which is the various maritime security threats. Former Prime Minister Jugnauth recognised that 'a safe and secure maritime environment is a prerequisite for the achievement of a Second Economic Miracle' (Government Information Service, 14 March 2016), This once again emphasises the public articulation of the relationship between sustainable development and maritime security highlighted in the previous section of this article.

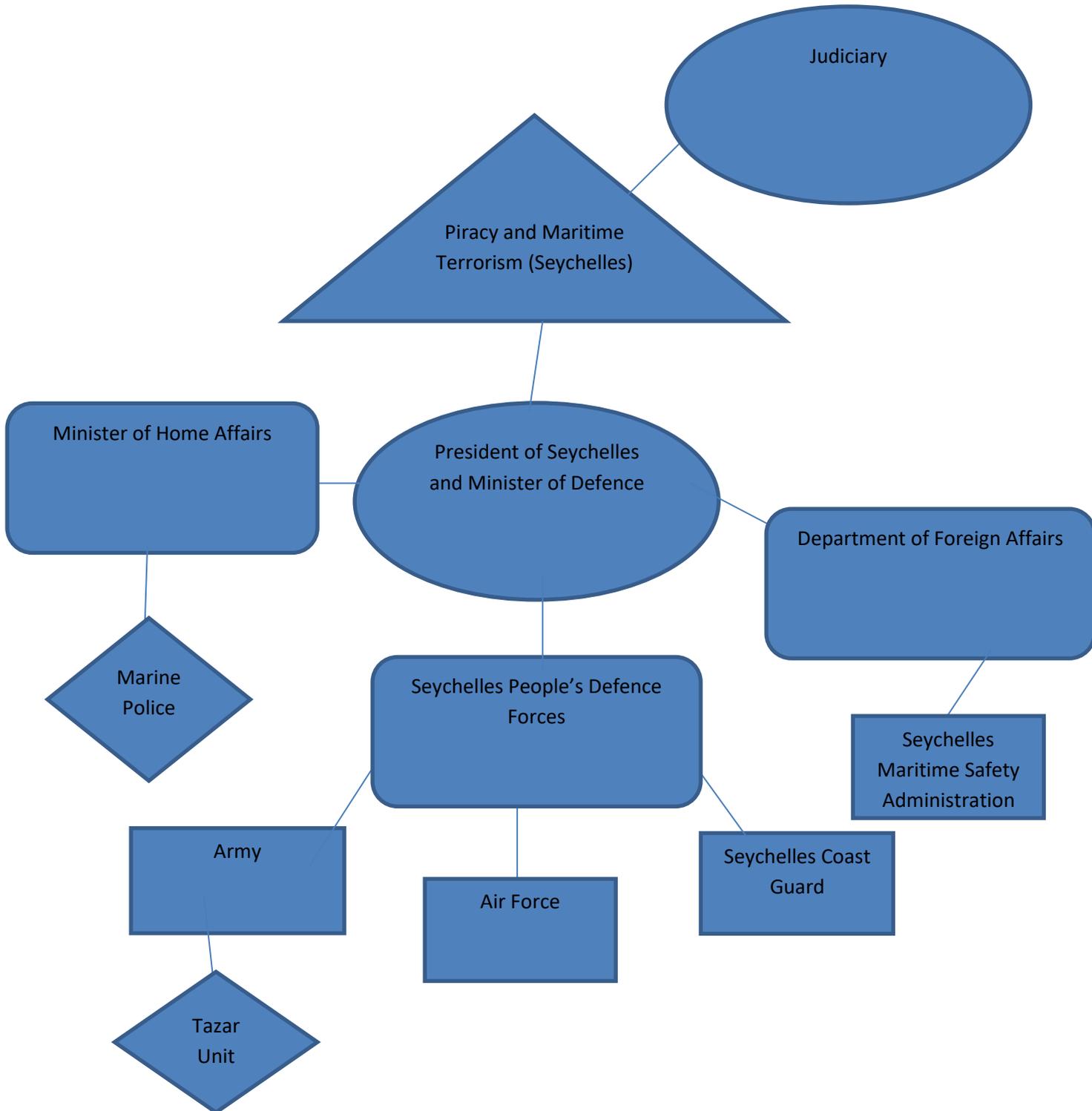
Drawing upon the documentary analysis conducted, supplemented with insights from informal discussions and semi-structure interviews; we can begin to map which threats to the maritime domain have been publicly articulated by the state over the past decade. Ultimately the two states have highlighted a similar range of maritime security threats with piracy, drug trafficking, oil spills, climate change and IUU fishing particularly prominent. Differences in geographical position and contexts have

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also meant that the extent to which both islands are affected by the threats can vary. For instance, even though both Mauritius and Seychelles were affected by piracy off the coast of Somalia, Seychelles was more affected because of its geographical position and stronger reliance on the seas for its economic wellbeing. The specific prioritisation of threats has also been dictated by events which, once solved, have tended to recede as a maritime security issue without ever fully disappearing from the picture. For example, Somali piracy has receded as a prominent threat with drug trafficking emerging as a new priority in both Seychelles and Mauritius. However policy makers are aware that the piracy threat will not disappear as long as Somalia remains unstable (Michel, 2011).

The responsibility for maritime security at the state-level in each country is shared between a range of political and security actors. These governance structures remain a work in progress, while it is notable that neither country has an overarching maritime security strategy yet.

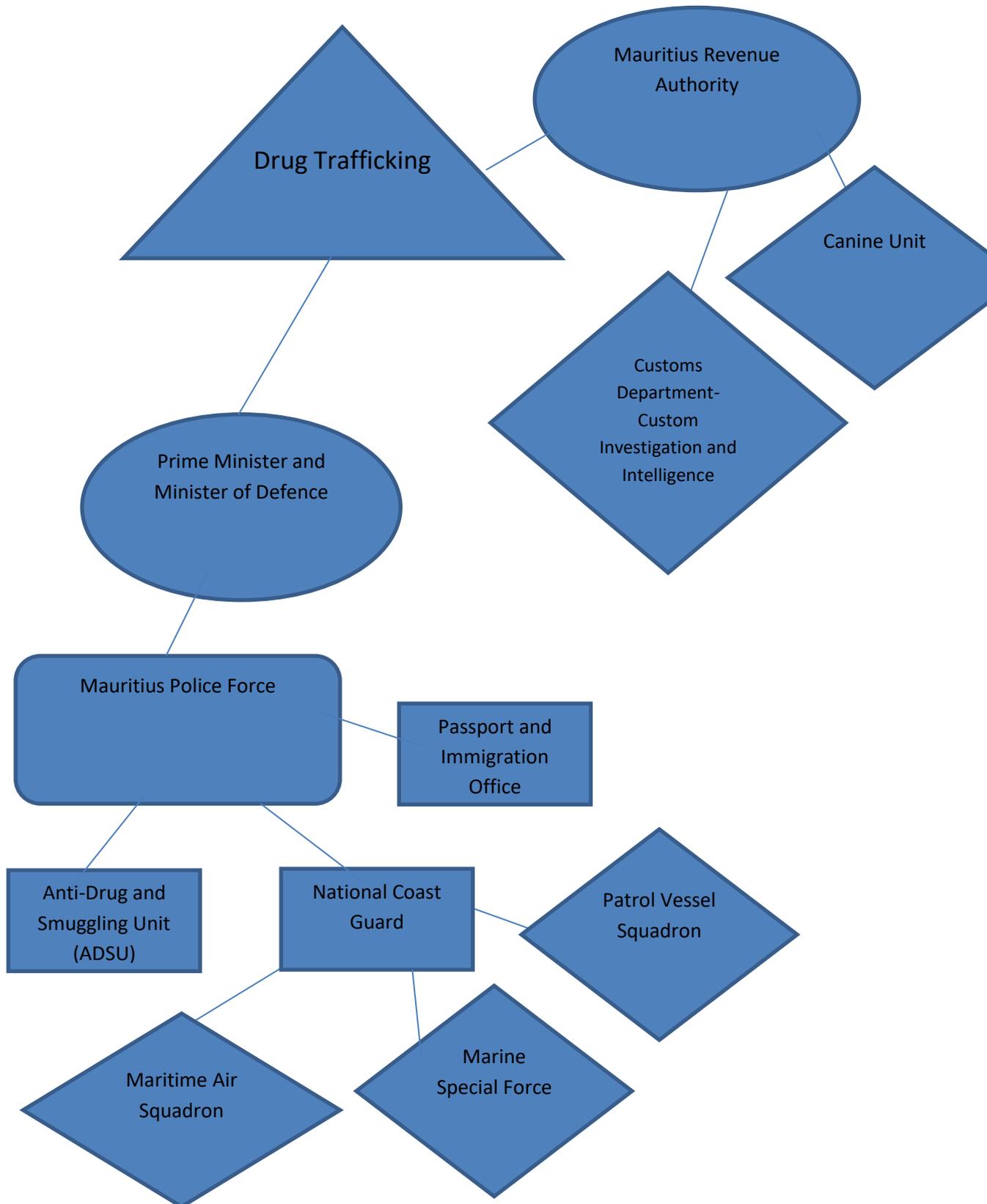
FIGURE 1: Seychelles (Piracy) (Key Institutions)



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In the Seychelles the main institution dealing with piracy is the Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF). Within the SPDF, there are several branches involved in the fight against piracy. The most obvious one is the Seychelles Coast Guard (SCG) but it is helped in the task of providing maritime security by the air force and the army. Within the army a special elite antipiracy unit called Tazar Unit was created in 2009 and was instrumental in engaging pirates and freeing hostages at the height of the piracy threat (Nation, 2009). It is worth noting that the overall institutional structure is overseen by the President who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the SPDF. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (now department of Foreign Affairs) also play a role because it represent the country in forums for coordinating actions against piracy (e.g. in the CGPCS). Furthermore it oversees the Seychelles Maritime Safety Administration (SMSA) which was created in 2004 and which the new president – Danny Faure - now wants to transform into an independent institution regulating maritime activities (Faure, 2016). There is also the Marine Police Investigation Unit (created in 2014) whose task includes maritime safety issues as well as security issues like piracy and drug trafficking (Nicette, 2014). Finally the judiciary plays an important role, previously ending the impunity for those involved in piracy.

FIGURE 2: Mauritius (Drug Trafficking Key Institutions)



In the case of Mauritius, the major agency dealing with drug trafficking is the Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU) which has among its main functions the detection and prevention of smuggling (The Mauritius Police Force, n.d.). In dealing with that task in the maritime realm it needs the assistance of the National Coast Guard (NCG) and as such both organisations must coordinate their efforts. The NCG has several units that help establish its presence in Mauritian waters and to undertake surveillance missions which are important for disrupting drug trafficking networks. These include the Maritime Air Squadron and the Patrol Vessel Squadron. The Marine Special Force was created in 2009 to combat piracy but they are also trained to deal with complex security situations like hostage taking and other maritime security threats (Tuyau, 2010). The other institutions mentioned in the figure are involved if smugglers try to use the port. In the cases discussed in this article the criminals avoided the port and sought to exploit the unguarded coastline instead.

To probe deeper in to the maritime security considerations of Seychelles and Mauritius it is useful to examine each country's relationship with a specific threat in detail. For Seychelles the article places its focus on the response to piracy, whilst for Mauritius it focuses on drugs trafficking by sea. This enables the article to cover an example of organised violence and an example of illicit activity in the maritime domain. Each section will highlight how the threat has been publicly articulated, alongside the nature of the response to that threat.

Seychelles' response to piracy

Piracy was a turning point in the maritime security field for Seychelles because it led to practices, institutions and the acquirement of capabilities that are now being appropriated to deal with a wider range of maritime security threats. Given its geographical position, the Seychelles was directly concerned by the rise of piracy off the coast of Somalia in the mid 2000's and unsurprisingly it was right within the high risk area delimitation. Its economy, based on the export of fish and tourism, was directly impacted by the rise of Somali piracy (Independent, 2010; Malbrook and Uranie, 2015). The following extract from the presidential speech at a symposium on piracy aptly captures the depth of the impact:

In 2009, our conservative estimates indicate a loss of 4% of our GDP due to piracy. Insurance costs have ballooned by 50%. Port and fisheries receipts have dropped by 30%. And we are spending over 2.3 million Euros per year on our anti-piracy patrols and surveillance. (Michel, 2010 a)

President Michel expressed even more pronounced grief at the human consequences of piracy:

In the last few days, there have been 3 attacks in and around our Exclusive Economic Zone, with an additional 8 in the Indian Ocean. In one of the attacks, 7 of our sea cucumber fishermen were taken hostage and were being ferried back to Somalia. Our forces intervened, and through decisive action we were able to prevent 7 of our brothers from being dragged away from their homes, their families and their livelihoods.

This is not the first time we have lived through such torment. 10 of our compatriots have already endured more than we could expect of any seafarer after being held in Somalia for over 6 months. My government did its utmost to ensure their release, and by the grace of God, we were able to welcome them home. Earlier this year our forces also rescued another 7 Seychellois and 21 Iranians being held on a captured dhow,

after disabling the vessel while it was under the control of pirates (Michel, 2010 b).

It is unsurprising with this negative impact that the threat from Somali piracy became a national priority for Seychelles. This coincided with international concern about the insecurity at sea, which in large part stemmed from the global importance of the Indian Ocean Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC). While Seychelles, like international society as a whole, was caught unprepared to deal with the threat posed, the country was soon among the leaders in the response; an interesting development bearing in mind she does not possess a navy.

Indeed despite its limited means, Seychelles' Coast Guard (SCG) has been involved in several counter piracy operations against Somali pirates. In 2009 for example, the SCG responded to a luxury cruise ship's (MSC Melody) call for help and arrested nine suspected pirates (USA Today, 2009). In April 2011, the SCG rescued four local fishermen from Somali pirates (The Maritime Executive, 2011). Whilst probably the most famous case was the action of 30 March 2010 when the SCG vessel 'Topaz' exchanged fire with Somali pirates and rescued several Seychellois and Iranians hostages from Somali pirates without causing any death (France 24, 2010). These events helped affirm the image of the Seychelles as a maritime security provider in the region. It also showed that it was a worthwhile enterprise to help the Seychelles coast guard acquire new capabilities.

When tackling suspected piracy many countries have been reluctant to prosecute pirates arrested by their navies because of the fear that these individuals will become eligible for asylum. However prosecution is important because of its deterrent effect. Seychelles played a vital role in ending impunity for piracy acts with other states such as Kenya and Mauritius also contributing to the task. Following a high court judgement in Kenya that the country could not judge crimes that happened outside its territory, the international community was in dire need of a state that could take responsibility to prosecute pirates. With the support of international organisations like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union (EU) alongside individual state partners (e.g. in terms of building new court facilities and jails), Seychelles accepted that responsibility and began to prosecute pirates in March 2010 (Onyiego, 2010). This was despite Seychelles' own very limited prison capacity.

By 2012 Seychelles 'held over 100 pirate prisoners and had conducted more piracy trials than any other country (some 140-150)' (House of Lords, 2012, p.16). The last remaining pirates were sentenced to 12 years by the Seychelles Supreme Court in June 2016 (CGPCS Newsletter, October 2016, p.4). Given the long sentences handed down, Seychelles' limited prison capacity meant it became increasingly difficult for pirates to remain in the country. As a result an agreement with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia was reached whereby Seychelles can transfer the prisoners to Somalia where they will serve their sentences (Malbrook and Uranie, 2015; Nation, 2011). Seychelles' way of combating piracy has been described as the 'prosecution model' and has been deemed so effective that it is now sharing its

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experience with states like Togo and Ghana (Malbrook and Uranie, 2015) - leadership through the sharing of best practice.

Alongside interdiction at sea, and the prosecution of suspected pirates; Seychelles has played a very active role in the 'Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia' (CGPCS). This governing instrument has played a central role in combatting Somali piracy and is credited with considerable success in responding to the threat. It was created in New York in 2009 pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1851 (December 2008). It called for the creation of:

an international cooperation mechanism to act as a common point of contact between and among states, regional and international organizations on all aspects of combating piracy and armed robbery at sea off Somalia's coasts. (UNSC 2008)

Even if it is not unprecedented, the CGPCS is an innovative security governance mechanism because of its informal and flexible characteristics (Tardy, 2014). It does not have a formal membership and consists of states and non-states actors including international and regional intergovernmental organisations, NGOs and actors evolving in the maritime realm (CGPCS Newsletter, March 2014, p.4). The CGPCS has several working groups (WG) that are created and modified according to the evolution of the security situation. Today there are three main working groups in the GCPCS: capacity building, coordination at sea, while the third one deals with disrupting the financial networks supporting piracy and the prosecution of kingpins. Initial assessment of the

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CGPCS shows that the contact group has been generally successful despite its imperfections (Swarttouw and Hopkins, 2014, pp.11-18).

The Seychelles was very active within the working groups of the CGPCS. For example it was co-chair of the WG 3 on coordination with the industry in 2014 and participated in drafting best management practices. Moreover Seychelles chaired the CGPCS in 2016 following on from the EU and its mandate was renewed for another year. This renewal is testimony that the role played by Seychelles is highly appreciated and recognition that despite its status as a SIDS and its limited capacities, it can be a reliable security partner. As former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon, observed during a visit to Seychelles in 2016, 'The United Nations also appreciates Seychelles' leadership on the problem of piracy as Chair of the Contact Group on piracy off the coast of Somalia' (Ban Ki-moon, 2016).

The incoming Seychellois Chairman of the CGPCS, Joel Morgan (also Seychelles' Minister of Foreign Affairs), made it clear that the Seychelles' agenda as Chair would reflect the agenda of the region (CGPCS Newsletter, October 2015, p.3). While the CGPCS was meant to be an ad-hoc mechanism, at the 19th Plenary Session of the Group in Seychelles it was decided that the institution would be maintained despite the declining threat of piracy. One reason for maintaining the CGPCS is because the root cause of piracy - instability in Somalia - is still present, yet there has also been acknowledgement that the success of the contact group can be replicated to dealing with other threats. The contact group's mandate is broadening, with 'The Djibouti

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Declaration' (15 May 2016) calling for the expansion of the CGPCS mandate to include other maritime security issues. The Seychelles has used its chairmanship of the CGPCS to push this agenda of consolidating the institution into a durable one.

This direction of travel makes sense for a small island like Seychelles because the CGPCS focussed the attention of the international society on the maritime security of the Indian Ocean. Maintaining the CGPCS is a way to keep that attention. This is important because as the Chairman Joel Morgan explained,

The region has already started to take its share of responsibility but we still need the International Community to maintain its effort until we attain a much higher level of maritime capability. (CGPCS Newsletter, October 2016, p.1.)

Here the theme chosen for the 19th Plenary Session of the CGPCS was 'From the Region to the Region: Creating a Lasting Legacy' (reference). With the minilateral nature of the CGPCS, small islands and regional states have a stronger voice in decision making in comparison to global institutions such as the UN Security Council. They can use this forum as a tool to acquire capabilities that will make them providers of security instead of just receivers. The emphasis on capacity building is one that has been seized by Seychelles as an important way forward with regards to enhancing maritime security. As Joel Morgan has argued,

Since 2008, we fought this scourge and have emerged victorious. We must, however, not become complacent as maritime insecurity takes on a different form today and evolves. The continued reporting in the news of terrorist attacks and other related maritime threats such as drugs and weapons trafficking, has proven how vulnerable the world and in particular especially our region can be if these dangers are not dealt with swiftly and in a systematic manner. The CGPCS community cannot remain indifferent to these problems, and we should continue to promote

international mobilization and find tangible solutions together for our common long-term security, even as we work to achieve our own objectives. (Morgan, 2016)

The piracy threat also showed the importance of having an integrated security system for policing the western Indian Ocean. With the help of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), two regional centres have been set up - The Regional Maritime Centre for Fusion of Maritime Information (RMIFC) that is based in Madagascar, and the Regional Maritime Centre for Operational Coordination (RMCOC) in Seychelles. The RMIFC is currently in a 'soft opening' phase while the RMCOC is on 'pre-operational mode' (CGPCS Newsletter, October 2016, p.8). The RMCOC is set up by the Anti-Piracy Unit (APU) of the IOC but will cater for range of maritime security threats affecting the western Indian Ocean (Nation, 2016). These include piracy and armed robbery, trafficking of persons, drug trafficking, oil spills as well as natural calamities like cyclone and tsunami (Nation, 2016). The RMIFC will feed the RMCOC with maritime information and in turn have the task of coordinating regional operations (Morgan, 2016). After receiving intelligence from Madagascar, the RMCOC will mount a regional response involving the resources (for example coast guard vessels and planes) of all member countries (Nation, 2016). In other words, the RMCOC will coordinate the pooling of resources among states in the region.

The RMCOC has the potential to transform Seychelles into a security hub and further contribute towards affirming the intention of the region to take responsibility for its own maritime security. As the Director of the APU, R. Agrippine, observed, Seychelles has been chosen because of its strategic position in the Indian Ocean and its experience in dealing with maritime security threats (Nation, 2016). In fact, its

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active role to combat piracy has given Seychelles the legitimacy to host this centre. According to the Chief of Staff of the Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF), 'our region's capacity to deal with the increasing threats of wider maritime crimes will be greatly enhanced' (Athanase and Bonnelame, 2016). In the same vein, President Faure has portrayed the RMCOC as 'the response mechanism for the East and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean Region under the Maritime Security Programme which targets all forms of maritime threats' (Nation, 2017). Yet the centres will continue to need the support of the international community to work properly (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2016), especially given ongoing capacity building needs. Only time will tell whether these regional mechanisms will be successful.

Mauritius' response to drug trafficking by sea

The decline of the piracy threat left states more space to devote attention to the trafficking of drugs by sea. Drug abuse is a major social problem plaguing Mauritius with the 'World Drug Report' regularly expressing concerns. For example, the 2008 report highlighted that Mauritius had the highest rate of use of opiates (mostly heroin) in Africa with two percent of the population affected (UNODC, 2008, p.57). The 2012 report confirmed this problem noting that,

'In Africa, the increasing use of heroin and drug injecting is also emerging as an alarming trend, particularly in Kenya, Libya, Mauritius, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania.' (UNODC, 2012, p.18)

Indeed the longstanding challenge posed by the use of illegal drugs in Mauritius was noted by security personnel in an interview conducted by one of the authors (Interview No. 9 2015). In a speech to mark the occasion of the commissioning ceremony of the Mauritian Coastguard vessel 'Victory', the Prime Minister underlined the need to enhance the maritime safety and security of the country against threats like drug trafficking and other maritime crimes. (Government Information Service, Newsletter, December 2016). For many years, the main points of entry were the port and more particularly the airport with several spectacular seizures of drugs. However there is now mounting evidence that a porous coastline is a major entry point for a vast amount of drugs. Indeed recently there have been cases that suggest that the problem is closely linked to a lack of surveillance in the maritime realm in the region. This section documents some of these cases which reveal the need for collective and concerted action both within Mauritius and among states in the region.

A recently declassified 1986 United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) document highlights that concern over the security of the Mauritian coastline, and its use as an entry point for illegal drugs, is longstanding (CIA, 1986). The CIA found that drugs illegally entering Mauritius were destined both for local consumption and, in the case of Mandrax and Heroin specifically, were transited through Mauritius to South Africa (CIA, 1986, p.14). Consequently the report predicted that,

[o]ver the longer term, the inability of the authorities to control the borders may encourage international smugglers to use Mauritius as a regional transship point for narcotics destined for other markets (CIA, 1986, p.14).

Nevertheless the report acknowledged that the drug smuggled in Mauritius was mainly destined for local consumption (CIA, 1986, p.11). It was believed that the drugs originated mainly from three countries: India, Pakistan and South Africa and was introduced in Mauritius through 'private yachts and cruise ships or through the VIP lounge at the country's single airport' (CIA, 1986, p.11). The declassified document also revealed the existence of a politically connected drug smuggling network between Mauritius and Reunion Island (CIA, 1986, pp.11-13). Interestingly, the CIA noted that the 'the three police patrol craft cannot adequately patrol the approximately 100-mile- long coastline' (CIA, 1986, p.11). Furthermore, it pointed out that 'checks of private yachts in the local harbor are rare' (CIA, 1986, p.11). While the local and international context has changed, the report provides evidence that there is a potential challenge to Mauritius and one that has a maritime dimension.

Indeed in 2012 the issue of drugs trafficking by sea came to prominence in the island. More specifically a steward (H.M.) of the 'Mauritius Trochetia' - a passenger and general cargo ship - admitted to being involved in the trafficking of drugs after the denunciations of one of the traffickers. The steward is now a star witness in the drug case before the Mauritian court and benefits from round the clock police protection. He described the whole mode of operation as child play because the maritime realm is vast and it is easy to avoid getting caught (Olitte, 2015). The drug was bought from Madagascar by the steward while working on the Mauritius Trochetia. He pointed out that laxity and corruption in Madagascar meant that it was easy to escape the control posts at the port (Olitte, 2015). To escape control at Port Louis in Mauritius the steward would, once the vessel had reached close to the west coast of Mauritius, call

an accomplice who took a motor boat to reach the vicinity of the Mauritius Trochetia (Olitte, 2015). From here the drugs would be dropped to the sea with a floater. He admitted to have carried out this kind of operation at least six times for three major drug dealers (Olitte, 2015).

More recently, in 2016, the Reunion police force intercepted a speed boat in Sainte Rose (Reunion) and arrested three Mauritian smugglers with 42.3 Kg of heroin while they were loading drugs on a speedboat destined for the Mauritian market (Le Mauricien, 12 November 2016; Le Mauricien, 14 November 2016). This was the first time that such a huge amount of heroin has been seized in the South West Indian Ocean and estimates suggest that the stock would have been sufficient to supply the Mauritian market for a period of 15-24 months (Le Mauricien 19 November 2016). The traffickers used a yacht by the name of 'Ilot Gabriel' that was registered in Mauritius with the intention of transporting the drugs from Madagascar to Mauritius. However, they had to stop at Reunion Island due to engine problems. The drug was kept in a safe place in Reunion Island for a period of time before they then found a speedboat by the name of 'Sweet Love Mama' (also registered in Mauritius) to transport the drugs from Reunion to Mauritius. Reunion Island authorities arrested the Reunionese accomplices of the traffickers while they were transferring the drug on to the speedboat. The traffickers sought to align the speed boat's arrival in Mauritius with the weekend in the belief that it would be easier to avoid NCG inspection due to increased vessel movements (Le Mauricien, 12 November 2016; Le Mauricien, 14 November 2016). Those caught by the Reunion island authorities admitted that they

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carried out a similar operation at the beginning of 2016 (Le Mauricien, 12 November 2016; Le Mauricien, 14 November 2016; Abel and Denmamode, 2016).

Collectively these cases suggest a threat exists and that there remain questions over the extent of maritime surveillance. Unsurprisingly, the Mauritian government discourse links the fight against drug trafficking with arming the national coast guard with better equipment to undertake surveillance in the maritime domain (Government Information Service, 14 March 2016). As the Prime minister pointed out in 2016:

[T]he surveillance systems is being reinforced by equipping the Police with state-of-the-art equipment and technology to counter the attempt to introduce drugs in Mauritius. The recent acquisition of Fast Interceptor Boats and patrol vessels are just a few examples (Parliamentary Debates, 29 November 2016, p.147).

At the same time the cases suggest that there is a need for a regional strategy to deal with the drug trafficking problem. As Captain G. Colpitts of US Africa Command, who supervised the Cutlass Express Maritime Exercise in 2017 puts it, 'there is a need for greater collaboration among countries in the region to combat drug trafficking' (Le Defi, 2017), with better information sharing a priority. Here the evidence of cooperation in the region is patchy at best. In the case of the Sweet Love Mama for example, the French authorities in Reunion Island were slow to collaborate with the Mauritian Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (Le Mauricien, 12 November 2016; Le Mauricien, 14 November 2016). Reunion Island authorities insisted that any request for international cooperation should go through the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Le Mauricien 19 November 2016). Furthermore the request should come

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from the French authorities rather than those of Mauritius (Le Mauricien 19 November 2016).

The latest Mauritian government strategies to combat the drug problem take into account the need for regional cooperation. In 2016, the now former Prime Minister announced the elaboration of a national master plan with the help of the UNODC (Le Mauricien, 30 November 2016). In line with its 2015-19 programme, the government has set up a Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking (Cabinet Decision, 10 July 2015). The terms of reference of the Commission (chaired by a former judge of the Supreme Court) includes investigating the sources and routes of illicit drugs, the effectiveness of local agencies involved in drug trafficking and the need to coordinate actions among local, regional and international agencies working to combat drug trafficking (Cabinet Decision, 10 July 2015). Similarly the Strategic Policing Plan 2015-18 underlines the need to 'strengthen local, regional and international cooperation and intelligence network' (The Mauritius Police Force, 2016, pp.31-32). The NCG is also becoming increasingly involved in the fight against drug trafficking.

Dealing with the maritime security aspect of the drug problem seems to be a task with new prioritisation for the NCG. In the 2013 NCG leaflet the word 'drug' does not appear in its list of objectives which were geared towards combatting IUU fishing and reducing drowning (National Coast Guard, 2013). In contrast, the NCG's 2015-16 Action Plan leaflet recognised the problem of drug trafficking in the maritime realm. The NCG has amongst its five objectives to increase joint operations at sea with the

Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU) (National Coast Guard, 2015, p.2). Undeniably, the NCG has sought to develop its capacities to address the problem of a lack of surveillance of the coastline. Between 2009 and 2016, a sum of 4.1 billion Mauritian rupee (Mru) was spent on acquiring equipment for the NCG and the Police Helicopter Squadron (Parliamentary Debates, 28 June 2016, p.115). More than half of this sum - 2.1 billion - was invested between January 2015 and June 2016 (Parliamentary Debates, 28 June 2016, p.115). The new equipment was acquired with multiple threats in mind. For instance ten fast interceptor boats equipped with machine guns enhanced NCG capabilities in terms of 'coastal patrol, effective surveillance, anti-smuggling, anti-poaching activities, search, rescue and fisheries protection amongst others'(Government Information Service, 14 March 2016). Another important addition to the capabilities of the NCG was the 'CGS Barracuda' at the cost of \$58 million (Government Information Service, 21 September 2016). It is used to patrol Mauritian waters to deal with pirates, boats and vessels indulging in IUU fishing and drug trafficking (L'Express, 3 March 2015). The Barracuda has long endurance capabilities and is also capable of carrying helicopters (Interviewee No. 4 2015). Similarly the Dornier aircraft acquired in 2016 is equipped with technologies such as a maritime patrol radar and infrared camera, all of which should enhance the NCG's capabilities to deal with threats such as drugs trafficking by sea (Government Information Service, 14 July 2016).

Despite this investment however, there are still potential gaps that could hinder Mauritius' capacity to tackle the supply side of the drug problem. The NCG still lacks equipment and personnel for the effective control of the Mauritian coastline (Carrim

and Jaulim, 2016). The western coastline is especially vulnerable to drug smuggling but the NCG faces a lack of personnel and equipment for the effective surveillance and control of boat movements in that area (Carrim and Jaulim, 2016). More specifically it has been reported that the NCG only have two (sometimes three) fast interceptor boats for the surveillance of the western coastline (Carrim and Jaulim, 2016). A look at the map of NCG posts around Mauritius also shows that many resources have been devoted to the northern and eastern part of the island whereas the western and southern coasts boast only six NCG posts (National Coast Guard, 2013; National Coast Guard, 2015). While the south coast is very difficult to navigate because of rough seas the west coast has very calm water making it suitable for navigation and potentially increasing the risk of exploitation. Nevertheless the NCG does make use of radar systems for monitoring vessels with the Automatic Identification System (AIS) for large vessels and the Coastal Ready Surveillance System for fishing vessels and boats (Maugueret, 2016). The NCG is working on a way to install transponders on board pleasure crafts to facilitate their monitoring (Maugueret, 2016).

Collectively this situation underlines the need for continued capacity building and strategies to combat drug trafficking by sea in Mauritius. It also shows that given the regional characteristics of drugs trafficking, it will be extremely difficult to win the battle alone. The United States has funded capacity building exercises for coast guard officers from Mauritius and other states in the Indian Ocean and Eastern Africa. One such instance is the annual Cutlass Express exercise which Mauritius hosted in 2017. The aim of the exercise was to develop participants' capabilities in 'controlling the

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waters around their countries, exercise law enforcement, reduce piracy, illicit trafficking, and promote commerce and trade' (US Navy, 2017). These types of exercises are also important because they help the various coast guards and navies of the region to learn how to work as a team. India has also been a key actor in conditioning the way that Mauritius interprets maritime security. India has the largest navy amongst Indian Ocean states and has been keen to help Mauritius in capacity building. The acquisitions of the CGA Barracuda was, for example, financed by India.^v Indeed the Indian High Commissioner has also affirmed that India is ready to respond all Mauritian maritime security demands (Groëme-Harmon, 2015). While there are longstanding and intense cultural relations between Mauritius and India, undoubtedly Mauritius is also benefitting from a favourable geopolitical context in which an increased Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean is pushing India to win influence in the region.

Conclusion

In recent years both Seychelles and Mauritius have, at the state-level, articulated more publicly recognition of the importance of their maritime domain for sustainable development efforts. In doing this, there has been a parallel increased emphasis on the way in which insecurity in that domain can undermine these development efforts threatening both state and human security, with a push to enhance maritime security. Through this exploratory case study the ways in which both islands have presented and responded to specific threats have been explored. Undoubtedly Somali piracy forced countries in the Western Indian Ocean to take note of the negative implications of insecurity at sea; yet as the focus on Seychelles' response to this piracy illustrated,

there has been a willingness on the part of Seychelles and the broader region to institutionalise best practice and look at the transferability of responses for other maritime threats. This situation emphasises that while countries often react to security challenges after they have emerged, there has also been recognition of the importance of being proactive in enhancing maritime security capacity.

Indeed, across both cases there has been a clear leap forward in maritime security capabilities since the start of the decade. New strategies and action plans with a relevance to the maritime domain have been introduced, departmental and security governance structures have been reformed, multi-national partnerships have been embraced, and new working practices implemented. Seychelles has played a significant leadership role in the CGPCS, whilst Mauritius has sought support to develop an action plan from organisations such as the UNODC and embraced its partnership with countries such as India. The basis of an integrated maritime security system in the region is emerging but there remains capacity-building needs in both countries. Moreover, it remains too early to claim success on the part of new initiatives such as the RMCOC. Ultimately it will require continued political will and sustained investment in assets and training to see this maritime security system thrive. Yet as international attention on the western Indian Ocean reduces in the midst of reduced piracy incidents, it will be interesting to see how the regional states sustain activity in the maritime security field.

This recognition that external actors matter when considering the maritime security of island states such as Seychelles and Mauritius highlights that for small states capacity

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is a particular structural constraint on enhancing capabilities. Whilst it is not possible to make definitive claims from this case study for the way SIDS as a whole approach their maritime security, this seems a conservative and fair conclusion. The case study of Seychelles and Mauritius also suggests that small states can play an active, leading role in regional security policy. Both Seychelles and Mauritius have begun to reframe themselves as 'large ocean states' (Seychelles News Agency 2015), whilst there is a clear acknowledge that maritime security is not a zero sum game with increased capacity in one island state understood as benefiting the region as a whole. Going forwards then additional case studies of the way in which SIDS have approached maritime security could offer important insights in to the way in which small states as a whole can sustainable develop and positively interact in the global arena.

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ⁱ Both countries have held a series of meetings to discuss shared management of the plateau region and have made a submission to the UN on the matter (Seychelles News Agency 2014; Seychelles News Agency 2016b).

ⁱⁱ For Seychelles we examined documents from The State House and the Office of the President of the Republic of Seychelles, with all speeches at the latter from June 2010 read. For Mauritius the Government Information Service which appears on the Ministries websites, particularly the Prime Minister's Office was the principal source of documents. Alongside this we examined documents from the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and the Mauritius Police Force, particularly its section on the National Coastguard.

ⁱⁱⁱ It is worth noting that there are currently no Mediterranean members of the grouping as Malta is represented through the European Union. AIMS has no stand secretariat nor formal structures.

^{iv} The former President of the Republic of Seychelles, James Michel, has also published a book titled, 'Rethinking The Oceans- Towards the Blue Economy'.

^v The Barracuda cost \$58.5 Million. \$10 million came from the Indian authorities and \$48.5 million from a loan from EXIM Bank India.